



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR
OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES

FEBRUARY 2014

REPORT OF AN ANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF
ROEBOURNE REGIONAL PRISON

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**Report of an Announced Inspection of
Roebourne Regional Prison**

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The Inspector's Overview

IMPROVEMENTS IN SOME AREAS, BUT TOO MUCH SLIPPAGE AND TOO LITTLE PROGRESS IN OTHERS

INTRODUCTION

Roebourne Regional Prison ('Roebourne') has always been a source of concern to the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services. This is demonstrated by the fact that whilst we usually report on prisons once every three years (the minimum legislative requirement), previous inspections of Roebourne have been conducted, on average, every two years (2002, 2003, 2006, 2008 and 2010). Inspection reports identified numerous problems which included: fragile staffing arrangements, poor prison infrastructure, and the dehumanising effects of overcrowding and inadequate climate control, although improvements were noted in 2010 in custodial staffing numbers, conditions for women and external training activities.

Following our most recent inspection of Roebourne in September 2013, we are very concerned about some of the conditions at the prison and services affecting prisoner rehabilitation, including education, the Aboriginal Visitors Scheme, offender program delivery, and limited industrial employment opportunities.ⁱ We also are very disappointed at the closure of the women's precinct at Roebourne causing their displacement to facilities in other regions and remain concerned about many aspects of prison infrastructure including the lack of climate control for most prisoners.

Nevertheless, the inspection did identify a noticeable improvement in the prison's staff culture. The management team was more united and, although there was room for further improvement, was communicating somewhat better with staff. The level of conflict and bullying among staff had also eased to some degree. In addition the education and vocational training unit had created a young and capable team with the potential to deliver a much more effective program in 2014.

There was also a palpable sense of hope surrounding the development of a new Town Work Camp and the opportunities it would provide the prison for regeneration. However, the prison was facing significant challenges, including:

- staffing the new work camp;
- coping with significant budget cuts; and
- reinvigorating education, training, programs, and employment services for prisoners, while maintaining the success of programs such as V Swans and Big hART, to reduce the prison's very high rates of recidivism.

ACTION ON INSPECTION FINDINGS

One of the most important outcomes of an inspection is the series of recommendations that flows from our findings. At our 2010 inspection we made 17 recommendations, 16 of which were supported by the Department. Some of the recommendations have been implemented, notably the establishment of a minimum security unit outside the current perimeter (see below).

Unfortunately, though, we found that progress in implementing recommendations had been poor in six cases, and less than acceptable in three. This is particularly disappointing given that the Department had claimed at the time that over half the recommendations were already covered by existing Departmental initiatives. As a result, in a number of cases, we have been forced to repeat the same recommendations.

i Education services had suffered from significant turnover since the last inspection while the Aboriginal Visitors Scheme had functioned only intermittently over the last three years. The delivery of programs to offenders had also declined markedly since 2010.

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This report makes 30 recommendations, of which only five have not been supported by the Department. One of these relates to the provision of air conditioning (see below). Of the 25 recommendations supported by the Department, six were supported subject to funding, and six were supported in principle.ⁱⁱ Two were supported on the basis they were existing initiatives, and one was supported in part. Ten recommendations were fully supported and the Department has committed to take steps to implement these.

NEW TOWN WORK CAMP

Roebourne has had a long and successful relationship with work camps. The Millstream Work Camp was closed in the period since the last inspection but had made significant contributions to the restoration of the Millstream-Chichester National Park after floods and in enhancing amenities for visitors. Similarly, the DECCA program, also now closed, provided excellent work-related training to a generation of prisoners in the Pilbara and was a national pioneer in this regard.

In 2010 we recommended that the Department “maintain under active review the option of constructing, in the short-term, a minimum-security area outside the prison’s current perimeter fence.” This had not been under active consideration at the time but the Department subsequently developed a business case and in 2011 secured ‘Royalties for Regions’ funding to build a Town Work Camp at the front of the prison.

The prison and the Department have done well to develop a vision for the new camp, and its imminent establishment provided a sense of hope that it will be possible to provide prisoners with improved skills to enhance their rehabilitation. It is also hoped that the new staffing structure will permit the prison to enhance training for prisoners unable to join the work camp.

FEMALE PRISONERS

Over the past decade, the management and quality of care of women housed at Roebourne has been of serious concern to this Office, particularly in regards to the condition of their accommodation and in the inequitable access they had to education, employment, programs and other services. By 2010 an effort had been made to improve conditions by extending the outdoor yard to incorporate a large demountable activity room and a garden bed suitable for vegetable growing. A part-time women’s support officer role was also established.

However by January 2013 the decision had been taken to close the main women’s yard at Roebourne leaving only a residual capacity to receive women on remand. Most of the women are now placed at Greenough Regional Prison. The small women’s remand section is now quite strictly segregated from the normal running of the prison. Women we met before and during the inspection expressed bewilderment, frustration, and anger at the degree of confinement they experienced compared to the men, the lack of any structured activity, their neglect at times by staff, and the lack of ready access to a telephone.

ii Supported in principle means that the Department has identified practical impediments to the implementation, e.g. lack of funding, and will take no action at this juncture to address the recommendation.

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Sentenced women from the Pilbara who were previously held in Roebourne are now generally held at Greenough Regional Prison.ⁱⁱⁱ They have somewhat better services there as there is a larger critical mass of prisoners. However, they are out of country and remain angry and non-plussed at what they see as discriminatory treatment compared with men from the Pilbara: ‘they can stay at home, why can’t we?’

The drop in numbers at Roebourne has also seen the regime deteriorate for the handful of women who are still there. Many staff also voiced their concern for the welfare of the women, believing that their isolation and the lack of a structured day was both unfair and unacceptable. Given both staff and our own concerns regarding the situation it is particularly disappointing that the recommendation (Recommendation 10) we made to improve the facilities, activities, and services for women held at the Prison was not supported by the Department.

During the inspection we also became concerned that while women had previously been allowed to attend church services they had now been excluded. On receiving our draft report, the Department stated that “female prisoners have not been stopped from attending religious services”. However, if the chaplaincy believes women have been excluded, and there is no effort by the prison to inform women of their rights, the reality is that they have been ‘excluded’. It is hoped that this will change given the Department’s acceptance of Recommendation 8.

FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

During 2013/14 Roebourne will be required to make savings of approximately \$650,000 compared to the previous year. This is a significant saving to achieve. Against this, the Department’s rental bill for Roebourne staff accommodation grew by 23 per cent between September 2011 and August 2013 despite substantial falls in market rentals during the same period. The increase in rental costs will be around \$1.2 million per year. Consequently, we have recommended that ‘DCS should develop a stronger negotiating stance with Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH) to make savings within the rental budget’ (Recommendation 25). The Department has supported this recommendation in principle. It seems to us that the Department has no choice but to consider alternate service providers, or for the Department and GROH to establish a relationship that better services government’s needs.

At a time of severe financial restraint it is also disappointing that the Department has not whole heartedly supported Recommendation 28: ‘Consider capital works investments to reduce the long term costs of utilities’. It has only supported this subject to funding. The idea that it is cheaper to run expensive services rather than upgrade infrastructure is false economics. Where it can clearly be identified that long-term savings can be made, then one would hope that Treasury and Government would support a properly argued business case.

iii We will be issuing a report specifically on the situation of women at Greenough Regional Prison in the coming months.

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PRISON MAINTENANCE

In 2010 I reported that 'no amount of maintenance can overcome Roebourne Prison's fundamental design problems but a more sustained preventative maintenance program is needed to see the prison through the next few years.' Unfortunately there has been no such program and in some cases the maintenance that has occurred has created fresh problems. For example ageing wooden cyclone protection shutters were replaced with steel shutters, but many of these new shutters are already visibly warping, and both staff and prisoners complained of the risk of injury due to the difficulty involved in opening and closing these shutters.

Given the time required to plan, approve, and then build a replacement prison at Roebourne, it is important that the Department consciously consider a formal life extension program for the prison.^{iv} Failing to undertake such investment will result in a continued decline in the prison's physical infrastructure and will force government into the more expensive option of a new prison.

RECIDIVISM

Roebourne's recidivism rate of 44.1 per cent^v is significantly worse than any other facility, and dramatically worse than the state average of 35.6 per cent. Given these figures, we were alarmed to find that offender program provision had collapsed^{vi} and that opportunities had diminished for training, preparation for employment, and employment placements on release. We have recommended (Recommendation 24) that the reasons for the prison's poor recidivism rate should be reviewed and appropriate action will need to be taken.

Most prisoners at Roebourne have serious substance abuse problems – predominantly alcohol. Running programs that address these problems should result in some improvement in the recidivism rate, and we have therefore recommended that the Department explore 'the engagement of an external provider to allow in-reach drug and alcohol services prior to release, permitting seamless re-entry services to those with substance misuse disorders transitioning into the community' (Recommendation 18). This recommendation was supported in part by the Department but its response is non-committal and appears to suggest that little can be done to assist binge drinkers. If the Department is serious about reducing recidivism, programs to address such patterns of behaviour should be developed and provided.

iv Key areas include renovating cell and ablutions areas (Recommendation 3), creating an indoor recreation facility (Recommendation 7), expanding the health centre (Recommendation 12), increasing prisoner engagement in employment, education and training for medium prisoners (Recommendation 20), and capital works investments to reduce the long term costs of utilities (Recommendation 28).

v Measured in relation to prisoners released between June 2010 to May 2011.

vi For example, in 2013 the only offender programs operating or planned at RRP were three short Cognitive Brief Intervention programs. This was a marked deterioration from 2010 when four different programs were available.

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CLIMATIC CONTROL AND BEDS

Roebourne is the hottest prison in Australia. This report essentially repeats the recommendation, made in earlier reports, that suitable climatic control to reduce air temperatures and to increase cool air circulation, air conditioning or some other form of climate control should be installed in the units (Recommendation 4). In 2010, the Department supported the same recommendation in principle and subject to funding. Roebourne is not getting any cooler but the Department has now rejected this recommendation. Although it has supported in principle a recommendation to provide other measures to help mitigate the impact of the harsh climate (Recommendation 5), it has given no specific commitment and no projected timeframe. All I can do is to repeat what I said in 2010: 'the current situation is intolerable and inhumane. The heat can be ferocious, and the conditions pose risks to the health and safety of prisoners, especially as many of them have health problems such as diabetes. If the State is to adequately meet its duty of care, adequate climate control is a necessity not an option.'^{vii}

For five years, since the 'double-bunking' of single cells started to become the norm, we have been raising concerns about the poor design of many of the bunk beds at prisons across the state. The risks include a lack of roll out protection and poor access arrangements to many of the top bunks. Due the Department's poor incident tracking and risk awareness, we issued a formal Risk Notice in August 2010. This prompted the Department to develop a new Policy Directive relating to shared cells. In response to our 2010 recommendation that 'at Roebourne Regional Prison and across the system as a whole, [the Department should] replace or modify beds that do not comply with appropriate safety standards', the Department stated that 'an audit process is in place to identify beds which do not comply with safety standards.'^{viii}

The Department did carry out a bed safety audit at the end of January 2011, but paper audits are pointless if they do not lead to action. As I commented at the time, the 'critical outcome will be bed replacement.'^{ix} This never happened. In their response to this report the Department stated that due to funding constraints, only the beds at Bandyup Women's Prison were brought up to the required standard. As a result we have been forced to recommend, once again, that substandard bunk beds be replaced to meet relevant safety standards (Recommendation 2).

CONCLUSION

Given the concerns we have expressed regarding a number of areas in the prison, and the challenges that the prison is facing, we intend to conduct a follow-up inspection before mid-2015.

Neil Morgan

14 February 2014

vii Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS), *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) v.

viii Ibid, 67.

ix Ibid, v.

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NAME OF FACILITY

Roebourne Regional Prison (RRP)

LOCATION

5 km North of Roebourne town, 1572 km north of Perth by road. The traditional owners of the land in this area are the Ngarluma people.

ROLE OF FACILITY

RRP is the receival facility for people sentenced, remanded or returned to prison in the Pilbara region. It only holds medium- and minimum-security males on an ongoing basis. Women, and males rated at maximum-security are transferred to facilities in other regions. Approximately 87 per cent of prisoners held identify as Aboriginal people.

BRIEF HISTORY

Roebourne Regional Prison was opened in 1984. The facility replaced Roebourne Gaol, now a tourist site in Roebourne town. It was converted from a minimum to a medium-security prison in 1995.

There have been six previous inspections, the last in September 2010. Construction of a 30 bed town work camp commenced in 2013 and is due to completed in early 2014.

ORIGINAL DESIGN CAPACITY

116

CURRENT DESIGN CAPACITY^x

161

PROJECTED DESIGN CAPACITY

191

NUMBER OF PRISONERS HELD AT TIME OF INSPECTION

170

DESCRIPTION OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS

Unit 1	Maximum/Medium	Three yards, one maximum and two medium
Unit 2	Medium	One large yard, recently converted from minimum
Unit 4	Enhanced privilege	Formerly the women's wing
Women	Maximum/Medium	Small remand/temporary wing

x As shown on the DCS website (at <http://www.correctiveservices.wa.gov.au/prisons/prison-locations/roebourne.aspx>) sighted on 6 February 2014. Despite the closure of the 12 bed Millstream Work Camp, this figure has not changed since 2010. This implies that the true operational capacity inside the prison is just 149.



Figure 1: Found objects' tree at the former Millstream Work Camp.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

ROEBOURNE REGIONAL PRISON

- 1.1 Roebourne Regional Prison (RRP) is located between the Roebourne and Wickham town sites, approximately 1572 kilometres from Perth. It operates as the regional correctional facility for the vast and remote Pilbara region.¹ Its design capacity is 116. The DCS website continues to give its operational capacity at 161, which includes extensive multiple-cell occupancy. Managing up to 200 prisoners during 2009/10, RRP's population had eased some months prior to the inspection, dipping briefly to the low 140s in August 2013, before climbing back to 170 when the inspection commenced in mid-September.
- 1.2 Roebourne Regional Prison is an Aboriginal prison in every sense of the word. More than 90 per cent of its prisoners are Aboriginal and although the surrounding area has seen massive investment in the mining sector over recent years, it is unmistakably an area strongly influenced by Aboriginal culture and laws. It holds medium and minimum male prisoners either on remand or sentenced. There is a small maximum-security yard used only on a short term basis.
- 1.3 Formerly RRP held both male and female prisoners but in early 2013 the main women's yard was closed, reserving just five beds for women on short-term remand, or who were returning for just a short time, including for the purpose of release, visits or 'sorry time'.

INSPECTION HISTORY

- 1.4 The Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services commenced operations in June 2000 and since that time it has conducted six inspections of Roebourne Regional Prison. The third of these was conducted in November 2006. The Inspector's exit debrief at the conclusion of the 2006 inspection noted that the prison was still fragile due to a range of factors, including crippling staff shortages, overcrowding, substandard infrastructure, extreme climatic conditions, paucity of services, absence of an Aboriginal prison perspective, and failure to implement change.
- 1.5 A short-follow-up inspection in 2008 found an improvement in staffing levels but drew attention to the failure to address some issues which had been raised at the Inspector's debrief at the end of the previous (2006) inspection. It was recommended that DECCA facility, which had apparently stalled be closed and that the Department develop vocational skills and training programs for prisoners on-site at RRP equivalent to those that were intended at DECCA. Notwithstanding the recommendation to close DECCA, DCS did invest in cleaning up asbestos on the site and got it going again with the support of its partner agencies.

¹ According to Wikipedia, the Pilbara covers an area of 502,000 km² and is known for its Aboriginal peoples, its landscapes, the red earth and its vast mineral deposits (in particular iron ore) and includes some of Earth's oldest rock formations. It includes landscapes of coastal plains and mountain ranges with cliffs and gorges. The major settlements of the region are Port Hedland, Karratha and Newman and it had an estimated population of 48,610 as of June 2010 (from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pilbara>).

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- 1.6 The last (sixth) inspection was conducted over a five-day period from 20 to 24 September 2010. This inspection found there had been positive progress in some areas, most notably with respect to custodial staff numbers and external training opportunities for prisoners, especially at DECCA. In this sense the prison was better placed than before. However, it still suffered from its ailing and outdated infrastructure, and a lack of clear strategic direction for the future.
- 1.7 Although custodial staffing levels had improved, too many key prisoner service positions had simply not been functioning for long periods. The inspection also found that urgent action was required to improve relationships, morale and consistency across both staff and management. Further, because little had been done to improve climatic control, most prisoners were still housed in inhumane conditions which carried risks to their health.

CURRENT SITUATION

- 1.8 Roebourne Regional Prison has undergone considerable change of late. The 2010 inspection, taking up local management's own ideas, recommended that DCS consider constructing a minimum-security area outside the current perimeter fence to help relieve overcrowding as well as facilitating prisoner involvement in community work and employment focused activities.
- 1.9 This was taken up by a successful application to Royalties for Regions for a Town Work Camp which was under construction at the front of the prison at the time of the inspection. The Town Work Camp will be fenced and have a capacity for 30 minimum-security prisoners. It will have large workshops designed to host the kind of work-ready and construction training that was previously undertaken at DECCA. It will also have educational facilities and a commercial-style kitchen. The infrastructure was on-track for handover by January 2014.
- 1.10 Stakeholders had been informed in 2012 that both Millstream Work Camp and DECCA would close when the Town Work Camp opened, but DCS decided in 2013 to close the Millstream Work Camp early, essentially as a cost-saving measure. The DECCA program was operating at a reduced level in 2012 but was anticipated to continue at a similar level in 2013. However, a combination of short-staffing and other factors meant that it has effectively been mothballed before being handed over for community-based training activities.
- 1.11 Overcrowding at Roebourne eased somewhat in 2013. The population declined partly because more Kimberley people were able to be accommodated in the West Kimberley Regional Prison at Derby. There were also some renovations in Unit 2, traditionally the yard for minimum-security prisoners, that allowed medium-security prisoners to be accommodated in that unit. This involved replacement of all cell doors and installation of grills to control unit entry. This made it possible to even out numbers between the main yards in Unit 1, which were chronically overcrowded, and Unit 2.
- 1.12 One of the saddest changes recently is the closure of the women's precinct at Roebourne, and their resulting displacement to other prisons, mainly Greenough Regional Prison. The former women's wing was well shaded, its cells air-conditioned, and had a functioning kitchen and fitness equipment. In recent years the area had been extended by creating

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a garden in a wedge-shaped outdoor area between two accommodation wings and installing a demountable for activities. This extension became the new women's remand section with a capacity of just five beds in three cells.

- 1.13 The former women's yard was converted into an enhanced-privilege wing for males, bolstering the hierarchical system for male prisoners at a time when the minimum wing was converted to medium security and the Work Camp was closed.
- 1.14 Staffing levels remain relatively strong and management more stable and united. However, staff absences, extended time frames for transfers and housing issues and impediments on recruitment have caused significant shortages at times. Conflict among staff and claims of bullying continues to be a distraction and financial constraints have begun to affect every area.
- 1.15 Several services had ceased to function properly. Education suffered from significant turnover with several positions vacant for extended periods, reduced external resources, and the loss of DECCA as a training vehicle. The Aboriginal Visitors Scheme functioned only intermittently over the last three years. Offender program delivery declined markedly and industrial employment was limited. The oval has more often than not been unusable. Unit BBQs have been out of action for two years and there were long periods when the dining room wasn't used.²



Figure 2: The New Horizons football program – a big lift for prisoners.

2 At the time of the inspection, both the oval and dining room were in use. All the matters touched on in this section are examined more closely throughout this report.

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- 1.16 However, the involvement of Big hART, which has worked with prisoners to express themselves through music and V Swans, which has worked with prisoners in alliance with the Wickham Rovers has given a dramatic lift to the cultural and sporting lives of prisoners. Preparation for release and re-entry supports on release remain a priority for the prison, but recidivism is stubbornly high.

THE 2013 INSPECTION

- 1.17 The 2013 inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison was announced on 31 May 2013 to commence on Sunday 15 September 2013 and conclude on Friday, 20 September 2013. A standard set of documents containing information about the prison was requested and provided, as was a list of contacts for agencies providing a service to prison. The announcement letter indicated that themes of particular focus for the inspection were:
- Management of minimum-security prisoners (work camps, DECCA, Section 95);
 - Management of medium-security prisoners (conditions, structured day, recreation);
 - Cultural respect and maintenance (staff prisoner relations, cultural life, Aboriginal health, external engagement);
 - Management of women received at and returning to Roebourne;
 - Management of special needs prisoners (remandees, maximum security, mentally impaired, chronic health conditions, at-risk of self-harm);
 - Rehabilitation and resettlement (education and training, programs, PEP); and
 - Staff management (leadership, communication, absence management, training).
- 1.18 The Department also accepted an invitation to provide a submission in advance of the inspection. This was provided in July 2013 and addressed the inspection themes. In July 2013, OICS staff visited Roebourne and administered surveys to prisoners and held a meeting at Roebourne with representatives of agencies involved with service provision at RRP. The staff survey was administered electronically. Data sets from electronic systems were also extracted for analysis in advance of the inspection.
- 1.19 In the event, an early start to the inspection was made on 12 September 2013 as an inspection team member became necessarily unavailable the following week. It concluded on 20 September 2013 with exit debriefs to staff and prisoners. The team included two coopted external experts. A standard methodology was employed involving analysis of data and documentation, interviews with persons responsible for different areas, observation of activities and interactions in many parts of the prison at different times of the day, casual contact with staff and prisoners, focus group discussions with staff and prisoners, deeper interviews with some individual staff and prisoners, all documented through notes and photography. There were also interviews with external stakeholders including the Shire President and CEO, and relevant staff from Pilbara Community Services, Pilbara Institute, Rio Tinto and Mawarnkarra Health Service.

Chapter 2

LIVING INSIDE

GETTING THERE (PRISONER TRANSPORT)

- 2.1 Roebourne Regional Prison prisoners are transported to and from courts by Serco, the agency contracted to provide court security and custodial services including prisoner transport. Serco is also contracted to provide a number of medical escorts and hospital sits when required. Most court appearances are in South Hedland necessitating a round trip of 390 km each day when prisoners are required in court. Court proceedings involving prisoners into the late afternoon cause difficulty for the contractor who are required to bring prisoners to RRP before reception staff and medical staff have completed their shifts. There are fewer officers on the night shift which makes it difficult to process arrivals after hours, especially new admissions. Medical staff are also needed to screen new admissions for any acute health or self-harm concerns. Kangaroos and stock also pose a significant risk to road transport at night, and especially at dusk.
- 2.2 The Superintendent in 2011 concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Police about the transport of prisoners from the Karratha, South Hedland, Port Hedland and Newman Police Stations to Roebourne Regional Prison, in which WA Police agree to: 'Not transport prisoners to the Roebourne Regional Prison between the hours of 1900–0600 hours daily'.³ On occasions, this means that a transport has to return to Roebourne from South Hedland Court leaving a prisoner behind involved in a late trial, to stay overnight in the Police watch-house. Slight delays causing a breach of the 7.00 pm deadline are tolerated by the prison up to a point.
- 2.3 With appropriate scheduling by medical staff, Serco by and large do a good job with medical escorts but are put in an invidious position by arrangements for dental treatment. RRP does not have facilities to host a visiting dentist and appointments can only rarely be obtained in Roebourne or Karratha. Most have to be seen at clinics in Port or South Hedland. The difficulty is that in the case there is more than one to be seen, the secure vehicle has to be used as a holding cell for anyone other than the prisoner being treated. Thus at least three contract staff are required to facilitate the escorts and staff the vehicle with engine running to maintain the air-conditioning and to monitor prisoners confined in their cells on board. This confinement is additional to the four hour return trip between Roebourne Regional Prison and South Hedland, and causes considerable discomfort to the prisoners concerned.

COMING AND GOING (RECEPTION)

- 2.4 The prison reception area is the entry and exit point for all prisoners. Warrants and other prisoner information are exchanged with the transport provider, and any property taken, registered and either properly stored or (if appropriate) issued to the prisoner. Prisoners are searched, issued prison clothing and basic toiletries, and an admission interview conducted which is recorded on the Department's Total Offender Management Solution (TOMS). They are normally also assessed by a nurse before being picked up by staff from Unit 1 (males) or Unit 2 (females) and taken to their cell.

3 The MoU was due to be reviewed in June 2013.

- 2.5 Many people are already stressed about their situation on arrival, and the procedures in reception can potentially elevate that stress. Reception staff were seen to be efficient, professional, polite and compassionate in their dealings with new prisoners. They worked together to process prisoners as quickly as possible after their arrival. The reception area also employs a peer support prisoner who assists with the processing of the prisoners and assists with the new prisoners questions wherever possible. This appeared to help put new prisoners more at ease.



Figure 3: The change and search room in reception.

- 2.6 However, the two reception positions had been substantively vacant for a considerable period. The reception area had benefitted from permanent Senior Officers in the past, with well organised property areas and efficient and easy to follow procedures in place. It was presently run by a seconded Senior Officer who had helped streamline procedures through developing a computer package of forms and processes, assisted by staff borrowed from the units when receptions or exits were being processed. The vacant Reception SO positions had been put up to head office to advertise some months before, but the process had stalled.
- 2.7 The particular balance of skills, knowledge and compassion required to operate reception is difficult to sustain with temporary staff and the failure to advertise these positions had created a risk. An example of this came up during the inspection when prisoners were received after 7.00 pm and the Senior Officer was unavailable. The health centre was not informed of these admissions and they were not seen by nurses until later the next day.
- 2.8 The reception area was clean and well organised, but with limited storage facilities.

GETTING STARTED (ORIENTATION)

- 2.9 New prisoners are considered to be maximum-security until their initial Management and Placement (MAP) assessment. For males, that means placement in the maximum-security wing. The residual women's wing could not be said to be maximum-security, but a newly received woman is placed there unless there is an obvious and serious risk to security, in which case, prison management advise, she would have to be accommodated in a multi-purpose cell (MPC). The MAP, typically done within one working day of admission, includes a determination of a prisoner's security classification, after which male prisoners may be placed in one of the medium-security yards in Unit 1. Orientation should commence as soon as possible and within 24 hours of arrival regardless of a prisoner's placement.
- 2.10 Prisoners were provided with a two part orientation process. The first part of the orientation involved prison officers talking new prisoners through the Guide to Roebourne Prison booklet, completing the orientation checklist on TOMS, and issuing a form to have external phone numbers approved. Since early 2013, a peer support prisoner also goes through the orientation booklet with them, checks they have had contact with their family, gives new prisoners a tour of the prison, talks about various services that are available and how to fill in forms to apply for spends, canteen, jobs etc. The peer supporter has to generate a form for each orientation which is signed off by the Prison Support Officer and reviewed each month by the Assistant Superintendent Operations.
- 2.11 The service provided by peer support is highly spoken of by prisoners and prison management, and he enjoys the role. OICS considers peer supporter involvement in orientation to be good practice. However, the profile of staff involvement in the process is now so low that no prisoner we spoke to claimed to remember any orientation being provided by staff, indicating a possible over-reliance on the peer supporter.

Table 1: Roebourne prisoner survey 2013 – reception and orientation⁴

Arriving In This Prison	2013 (%)	2010 (%)	WA (%)
Did respondents feel they received enough information to understand how the prison works?			
No	38	33	37
Yes	48	77	63
Don't remember	15	n/a	n/a
How upset respondents were on first arrival in this prison?			
Very upset	20	32	40
Upset	29	34	29
Not upset	52	34	32
How respondents perceived how well staff helped them at this time.			
Not well	40	30	38
Okay	46	55	46
Very well	14	15	17

⁴ OICS pre-inspection survey, July 2013. Figures for 2013 and 2010 are from Roebourne prisoner surveys only. The WA column is the average responses from surveys of all adult prisons in WA over the previous three years.

- 2.12 As shown in the above table, the pre-inspection survey found that only 48 per cent of prisoners reported feeling that they received enough information to understand how the prison works when they arrived at the prison, which is a decline on the 2010 survey result of 77 per cent. On the other hand, fewer prisoners (20 per cent) reported feeling very upset on first arrival in the prison in the 2013 survey compared with 2010 (32 per cent). The survey was done in July when the peer support involvement in orientation had only been running for two or three months.
- 2.13 This presents something of a risk to the prison and suggests that management should review prisoner orientation, especially the component delivered by staff. It can be hard to absorb information immediately after coming into prison for the first time, so consideration should be given to a follow-up contact, either by staff or peer support. It would also make sense for borrowed copies of the Orientation Handbook to be provided to browse during a prisoner's first week in the centre. Each topic has a picture, and even the illiterate can ask others or staff what something means. Presently, prisoners have to ask at the unit office to borrow a copy of the handbook.

Recommendation 1

Review orientation processes for both male and female prisoners to ensure that orientation is consistent, comprehensive and effective.

GETTING A FEED (CATERING, CULTURAL FOODS)

Table 2: Extract from 2013 prisoner survey – views on food

Considered Good:	2013 (%)	2010 (%)	WA (%)
Food quality	42	62	46
Amount of food	38	58	52

- 2.14 As shown in the above table, prisoner views on the quality and quantity of food had worsened since the 2010 inspection and were significantly worse than state averages. Prisoners also rated food as the second worst thing about life at Roebourne prison. This is concerning, but we had trouble identifying the source of this discontent. During the inspection, the food was nutritious, plentiful, freshly cooked and reasonably well presented. While not provided in the preferred way, cultural food was provided on a weekly basis which was popular with many.
- 2.15 The kitchen was adequate and appropriately equipped with cool rooms, baking oven, meat slicer and bulk cooking equipment. The fridges and freezers were new and other equipment in good repair, other than a fryer which needed to be replaced. It appeared clean and well maintained and there were no obvious signs of vermin. Staff were able to outline processes for cleaning and checking all equipment, and monitoring and recording food temperatures at various stages of cooking or storage. It was last inspected by the Roebourne Shire Environmental Health Coordinator in May 2012. The Health Coordinator was broadly satisfied, including with food storage temperatures and the state of the dining room.

However, he made some minor recommendations which required attention, including the cleaning of certain areas, minor repairs and refurbishment to others, all of which the prison had implemented.



Figure 4: One of the better lunches provided.

- 2.16 The kitchen had two cook instructors with a prison officer who is a qualified chef able to act as a relief instructor. There were 15 prisoners working in the kitchen including: four food handlers; two bakers; three dining room cleaners; three kitchen cleaners; two washers and one storeman. Those involved with food handling were required to undertake the One Star Good Handling Program with additional training including safe use of the meat slicer. The cook instructors monitored prisoners' use of equipment and safe handling of food. As most prisoners were serving short-sentences, there was a limited opportunity to undertake traineeships. There was also a perception by staff that the kitchen workers were difficult to motivate, and that they had low skill levels. Perhaps the provision of some form of accredited training (short courses) as a pathway to further training or work might provide greater motivation for some. If so it may be necessary for the prison to develop partnerships with community training providers so that courses started in prison can be continued in the community.
- 2.17 Roebourne provided a four weekly cyclic menu, which varied depending on stock availability and delivery. Frozen vegetables were stocked for emergencies such as for lockdowns during cyclonic weather and if fresh vegetables were delayed or spoilt. We were advised that the DCS head office considered the menus were nutritionally appropriate, including those with diabetes. There was little demand for special menus.

There were no vegetarians or other prisoners with dietary needs except one on a fish-free diet. Medical advice was required for the provision of any special long-term diets. Soft food was prepared for prisoners who had recently attended the dentist. However, at the time of the inspection the food processor was under repair making this difficult to achieve.

- 2.18 The prison kitchen provided cultural food once a week on Sunday evening, to the 60 or so prisoners who requested it during the week. Camel, kangaroo tail and rump are provided with tail being the most popular. Prisoners have the opportunity to cook the food themselves in the kitchen under supervision of the cook instructor, who sometimes had to cook it himself. A fire pit is used only on special occasions like NAIDOC celebrations. While men would prefer to use a pit more regularly, this is something the prison will not countenance due to hygiene and safety concerns. Prior to the inspection the prison was experiencing problems sourcing kangaroo tails, however this had been resolved. We also had information at a Peer Support meeting prior to the inspection that men from certain areas were obliged under tribal law to refrain from eating fish during mourning times. Prison management appeared responsive when informed.
- 2.19 In the last inspection this Office noted that despite having a dining room of sufficient size for the population, prisoners were eating meals in the units where there was a lack of sufficient infrastructure include tables, seating and dishwashing facilities.⁵ This caused potential problems with hygiene and vermin. There have been significant periods since then when staffing shortages have caused staff to close the dining room, or it had to be closed for maintenance reasons. However, at the time of the inspection, the dining room was in regular use for breakfast and dinner, and at lunch for those in the industries quadrangle, and had been for some months.
- 2.20 While prisoners were provided with cold toast as part of their breakfast, much of it was wasted. Lunches of bread rolls, salad packs, pies or pasties are consumed in the units, notwithstanding a lack of adequate seating or table space.
- 2.21 Prisoners continue to express anger and dismay that the picnic style electric BBQs have been out of use for some years and not replaced despite promises from prison management. The existing BBQs were deemed unsuitable due to insufficient capacity and issues with maggots and flies in the enclosed dripping receptacle. These issues are hardly unmanageable and the decommissioning of the BBQs so long before a replacement could be installed is less than ideal. Efforts to replace them have suffered from a combination of bureaucratic neglect, poor scoping and a loss of funding, notwithstanding a sincere intention on the part of management.
- 2.22 Sour milk was a big issue during the inspection. It is supplied weekly on Sunday via a three-day journey from Karnet Prison Farm. Prisoners claimed the milk tasted ‘off’ later in the week and was often supplied after its use-by date. In reality much of the milk is frozen on arrival and thawed before being issued, rendering the use-by date invalid. It was not known if the sour milk was caused by the journey or milk handling practices within the prison. At times, powdered milk had to be used as a substitute. We were told

5 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 23–24, [4.17]–[4.21] and Recommendation 11.

that officers rarely had any time to check products delivered until after the truck has left, too often to discover fruit and vegetables that had already gone bad. Kitchen staff note that the vegetable content, taste and quality of meals would be improved should herbs and vegetables be grown in quantity at RRP and able to be utilised. Issues with the water supply and staffing have stymied vegetable growing for many years but it is certainly time this was revisited.

GETTING KITTED OUT (CLOTHING)

- 2.23 All the prisoners observed during the inspection were wearing clean and presentable clothing. Prisoners are issued with their own sets of clothing each item of which are tagged with a specific number to be collated and returned from the prison laundry. However, like most prisons, underwear issued was generally second hand – a potential hygiene issue of concern to some. Prisoners have sometimes complained to independent visitors or liaison officers when DECCA, industries and gardens were functioning well, at the lack of suitable work clothing on issue at RRP. In the 2013 pre-inspection survey, prisoners were only somewhat satisfied with their clothing issue but quite satisfied with the laundry arrangements.
- 2.24 The laundry equipment is adequate and in good repair, however, laundry operations have been a running sore between staff represented by WAPOU and local management for at least the last three years. Staff are concerned that the laundry is unsafe if not continuously supervised by staff qualified to operate a laundry. The role has been covered only by custodial staff without specific laundry training, either as part of their rolling roster or through longer placements in the laundry. This has been compounded when officers placed there have, too often, then been cross-deployed to other custodial roles, often leaving prisoners unsupervised. The prison agreed that ideally the laundry should be operated by a Vocational Skills Officer (VSO) with appropriate training, and a business case was prepared for an Adult Custodial staffing review, which has yet to be implemented.
- 2.25 In relation to staff concerns regarding the safety of the laundry, the prison requested a WorkSafe inspection which the prison states was generally affirming about the laundry operation but resulted in the issuing of four Improvement Notices under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984*. These notices related to unsafe storage of flammable chemicals, failure to provide eye-wash stations, failure to conduct risk assessment for hazardous chemicals and failure to keep a hazardous chemicals register. Prison management committed to addressing these issues within the required time-frame, but staff remained dissatisfied with the response, expressing other safety concerns. These concerns included matters such as: the lack of air-conditioning in the laundry and storage shed, the lack of a First Aid Chest in the laundry (it was in the laundry officer's office, awaiting mounting in the laundry itself), the laundry officers' lack of First Aid Training, and the fact that the same carts are used to transport both clean and dirty laundry. It was claimed that the latter practice, consistent with practice in other WA prisons, was a breach of the Australian Standards for Laundry Practice.

- 2.26 The commitment by management at RRP to address the WorkSafe Notices is noted, as is their submission to create a laundry VSO position which it is believed was accepted by the yet to be implemented staffing review. Some form of instruction would seem to be essential for staff supervising laundry operations, whether acquired through accredited training, a work book or other means. This suggests staff need to be placed there for a significant period (as is currently the case), not just briefly on a rolling roster. It is also time to re-engage prisoners in Laundry certificate training available through education. Air-conditioning is certainly needed in that environment, perhaps as a matter of comfort and decency, if not safety. First Aid currency is maintained for all Senior Officers at RRP, and various other staff and prisoners are also qualified. OICS is unable at present to confirm the claim that practices constitute a breach of the Australian Standards for Laundry Practice, but it would seem appropriate for this to be examined within DCS at a state level.

FINDING A BED (CELL PLACEMENT AND OVERCROWDING)

- 2.27 Roebourne Regional Prison was designed with a number of four bed and two bed cells. However, most have had double bunks installed so there are six beds in four bed cells, three in two bed cells and two in some of the single cells. In the past when numbers were especially high, overcrowding was at times severe, something that persisted in Unit 1 even when numbers eased. This was because only about a third of the population were rated as minimum security and therefore able to be accommodated in Unit 2.
- 2.28 In 2012, prison management trialled the placement of selected medium-security prisoners in the minimum-security yard to ease overcrowding. This had a marginal impact and a decision was subsequently made to modify Unit 2 to permanently house medium-security prisoners. Works were undertaken in February 2013 to replace all the cell doors in the main wing in Unit 2 with more secure doors and to create secure entrance grills to that wing. However, unlike the main yard in Unit 1, there was no attempt to divide the wing into two yards or to cover the yards to prevent roof access. Newer medium-security prisoners reside in Unit 1 until they can be trusted to be placed in Unit 2.
- 2.29 Another modification in February 2013 was the conversion of the traditional women's yard into an enhanced privilege wing for male prisoners. The former women's yard is quite confining but has air-conditioned cells, good shade, picnic tables, pot plants, exercise equipment and a working kitchen in its day room.

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- 2.30 In general these changes have allowed a welcome strengthening of a hierarchical placement system, while allowing prisoners to be distributed more equitably between the units thereby reducing overcrowding in Unit 1. This appears to have lifted the mood of prisoners and staff to some degree. However, it was surprising to find cells in Unit 1 that still housed seven prisoners, meaning one of their number did not have a bed.⁶ Staff say this is a consequence of choice by the prisoners themselves who wanted to be together. We spoke to a number of these prisoners. They advised that they were provided with a mattress, but one prisoner did not use it as he felt it was bad for his back. Another prisoner advised he did not mind sleeping on the floor, but it was annoying to have people stepping over him when walking around the cell. It is reasonable for a new prisoner to be placed with his countrymen when first arriving, even if it means a bed on the floor, but such irregularities should be resolved as soon as practical.

GETTING TO THE TOP (BUNK BEDS)

- 2.31 The 2010 inspection of Roebourne Prison took issue with the safety and quality of the prisoners' beds.⁷ We saw no evidence of improvement in 2013, and were advised by management that no new beds have been installed. The beds we observed in cells varied in quality. Some bunks had roll guards and ladders, many did not. Mesh mattress supports were tearing away from their bed frames in some instances compromising back support. The foam mattresses sourced from Albany prison industries was reasonably firm with a cotton cover. Prisoners had sheets and light blankets, which were suitable to the climate conditions.
- 2.32 Following recommendations by this Office at various inspections, including that at Roebourne, DCS developed a robust standard for double bunk installations and procedures for assessing people for placement in upper bunks.⁸ It also undertook to audit all beds and replace or modify bunks to comply with the new standard.
- 2.33 In its action plan for Recommendation 4 from the 2010 Roebourne Inspection report, DCS indicated it planned for Roebourne's bunk assessment to be undertaken in January 2012 and for bunk replacement or modification to be completed by December 2012. In July 2013, it was noted that Infrastructure Services had yet to finalise its audit of cells at RRP and that it may be another 18 months, that is by December 2014, before such work is completed.

Recommendation 2

Conclude the audit and remediation of substandard bunk beds at Roebourne Regional Prison without further delay.

6 According to the TOMS database, five cells, originally designed to accommodate four prisoners, were occupied by seven prisoners on 18 September 2013, on the Wednesday of the inspection week.

7 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) v, 11 and 12, Recommendation 4.

8 DCS, Policy Directive 73.

LIVING WITH CLUTTER (CELL CONDITIONS)

- 2.34 We have already above touched on the density of occupation of cells, the presence of double bunks in most cells, people sleeping on floors and the poor quality of many of the double bunks in cells. Heat and air in other cells is controlled by grills which allow air flow and cyclone shutters which can limit air flow and control light and direct heat from the sun. Some cells have ceiling fans, which are of only limited value, and desk-top fans have also been supplied. The question of climate control is further explored below at paragraphs 2.45–2.50.
- 2.35 There were lots of complaints about the metal cyclone shutters which replaced damaged ones identified in the 2010 inspection.⁹ Prisoners complained that the metal shutters absorbed and radiated heat into cells when closed. They also lack any control over the shutters when inside cells and those on outer walls were in no-go zones for prisoners. Staff noted that shutters had to be sealed many hours before a cyclone was due which created extremely difficult conditions in the cell. A number of shutters were visibly warping and crude shed-door bolts were used to secure them. Staff and prisoners alike complained of the risk of injury due to the difficulty involved in opening and closing these shutters and indeed one staff member showed an injury to his hand caused by this. Cell doors in Unit 1 were also in poor repair and needed to be replaced.
- 2.36 The marine ply from the previous shutters was used to replace the desk/shelving fittings in many of the cells, although some of these were already blighted by graffiti and in need of re-polishing and sealing. Those which had not been replaced were in appalling condition, severely damaged by years of graffiti and other marks which caused expansion of the MDF, and stained by food and drink. The shelves provide the main storage for all prisoner property including clothes, magazines and foodstuffs. In most other prisons, much of this would be stored in plastic bins placed under beds.
- 2.37 At RRP, shelves were strewn with breakfast bowls, cutlery, mugs, spare bread rolls, sweeteners, packets of jam, lighters, and loose clothes. TV sets, often not visible from all the bunks, are also placed on desks or shelves. The floor was also occupied by laundry bags, loose clothes, cardboard boxes, plastic chairs (a necessity for climbing some bunk beds), guitars, and, in larger cells, rubbish bins. Notice boards were old, frayed and graffiti-damaged. Paint in cells was generally good, if grubby in places and the lino well cleaned, but parting in places and probably beyond repair. Prisoners were especially concerned that gaps in the lino in the toilet area meant the floor was essentially uncleanable, and likely to harbour disease.
- 2.38 Torn flyscreens were implicated in the report of the 2010 inspection as allowing entry to rodents.¹⁰ While rodents were not in evidence, there were many torn flyscreens, which of course would not be effective in their primary purpose, the control of insects. The In-house Maintenance Schedule has flyscreens marked for full-replacement on an annual basis. This appeared to be overdue at the time of the inspection.

9 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 10, [2.20].

10 *Ibid*, 15, [2.39].



Figure 5: Cluttered shelving in a multi-share cell.

- 2.39 Given the level of underemployment at RRP (more on this below), most cells are occupied for much of the day and certainly in the afternoons. The units lack any large indoor areas, and certainly none with air-conditioning, so cells are an essential refuge during the heat of the day. Of course, cells have to be tidied up every day for the morning population count, nevertheless, the overall impression was of squalor. According to the pre-inspection survey prisoners at Roebourne were not dissatisfied with their living conditions. Still, more could be done to promote cell tidiness, such as provision of under-bed containers for property, and containers for utensils, cutlery and food, and it is also clear that many cells are seriously in need of renovation.

Recommendation 3

Renovate cells including replacement of warped shutters, cell doors, shelving, noticeboards and linoleum where required, and repaint all surfaces and provide under-bed storage.

LIVING DAY TO DAY (UNIT LIVING)

- 2.40 RRP has two units, each of which has two triangular shaped yards, one large and one small (see diagram below). Each of these yards has cells comprising the sides of the triangle with verandas acting as shaded walkways. In the case of Unit 1, the larger yard is divided by a wall into two medium-security wings. The outdoor area of each wing is covered over with a metal framework and mesh. The smaller yard is used as the maximum-security wing. This is also covered over as is the enhanced privilege wing (formerly part of the women’s precinct) which is the smaller yard in Unit 2. Both of these small yards are quite well shaded.
- 2.41 The larger yard in Unit 2 has long been the minimum wing, although it has recently been converted into a medium-security wing. This yard is not covered over and has a pleasant lawn and vegetation. In this yard and the two other medium yards in Unit 1, shade is available only in cells, under verandas, in smoking shelters and day rooms, although shade sails are deployed in summer months.
- 2.42 Most day rooms have just hot water urns, a sink, a freezer, a fridge and a rather strange one sided bench seat and table combination that never seems to be used. As stated above, these are not air-conditioned, nor are they equipped for cooking. More picnic tables have been installed on verandas, but when eating food in the unit, there is still insufficient seating space, leaving prisoners to eat sitting on the edges of the verandas or inside their cells. Units lack fitness equipment, other than that left in the enhanced privilege wing formerly supplied for the women. The only recreation resources are table tennis tables on verandas and pool tables. There are no communal TVs.

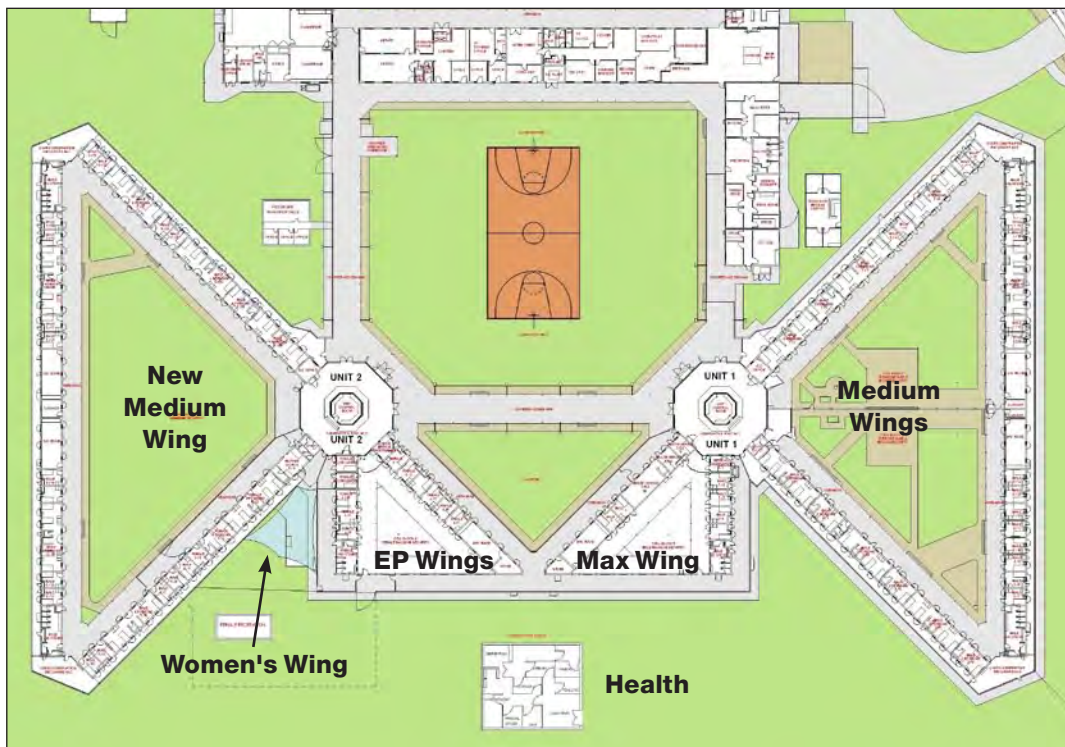


Figure 6: Accommodation units at RRP.

- 2.43 The ablution blocks are in reasonable order but there was evidence of missing tiles, staining and missing doors on shower stalls. Shower temperatures are pre-set and there were often complaints about them running hot or cold. Prisoners also frequently complain about the lack of water coolers in the units and say that the freezer in the day room struggles with so many bottles needing to be frozen to get them through the hot nights. There have also been complaints about the water urns, which have been affected by mineralisation from the water.
- 2.44 Smoking is technically only permitted in the smoking huts, but we saw prisoners smoking anywhere they wished on the verandas. This is confirmed by staff who say they are too often affected by sidestream smoke from prisoners whilst walking around the yards, and also from prisoners smoking in cells, contrary to standing orders. Prisoner workers appeared to do a good job cleaning the yards, ablution blocks, day rooms, and their cells (despite the clutter); and have good access to necessary cleaning supplies.

STAYING COOL (CLIMATE, TEMPERATURE CONTROL)

- 2.45 According to the Bureau of Meteorology's chart of average daily maximum temperatures for summer, Roebourne Regional Prison is in the second highest gradient with mean temperatures in the 36–39°C range (see diagram below). It only just misses out on the highest gradient with mean temperatures for Roebourne in December being 39°, January 38.7° and February 38°. Peak temperatures can be much higher, with the average maximums in December being 45.4°, January 45.3° and February 43.9°. RRP is the only Australian prison within this gradient and is therefore the hottest prison in Australia. January and February are also the worst months for relative humidity, at 40 per cent and 44 per cent respectively yet relief in the form of rain comes on average just 2.4 and 3.4 days per months of January and February respectively; these are the wettest months of the year.¹¹
- 2.46 Despite the temperatures, only a small number of prisoners in the maximum-security wing and the enhanced privilege wing (formerly the women's yard) enjoy air conditioned cells. However, the design of these installations is problematic insofar as users have no ability to control whether the system runs and at what temperature (often set too low), and windows were sealed in a way that prevents adequate air-flow if the system is turned off or the power is unavailable.
- 2.47 The main accommodation blocks at Roebourne absorb heat during the day and radiate heat at night, reducing the cooling effect from ceiling fans or breezes. Metal cyclone shutters are blamed for radiating heat directly into the cells during the day including over lunch when many are confined to their units and prefer to rest or socialise in their cells. Cells open onto outside verandas providing a reasonably pleasant outlook in winter months, but limited protection from the sun during summer months. Day rooms are small and ineffective as spaces in which to spend time or eat meals not served in the centre's dining room. The latter is a large indoor space which is air-conditioned, but only utilised briefly at certain meal times.

11 Bureau of Meteorology, retrieved from <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/index.shtml>. Relative humidity is recorded at 3pm daily.

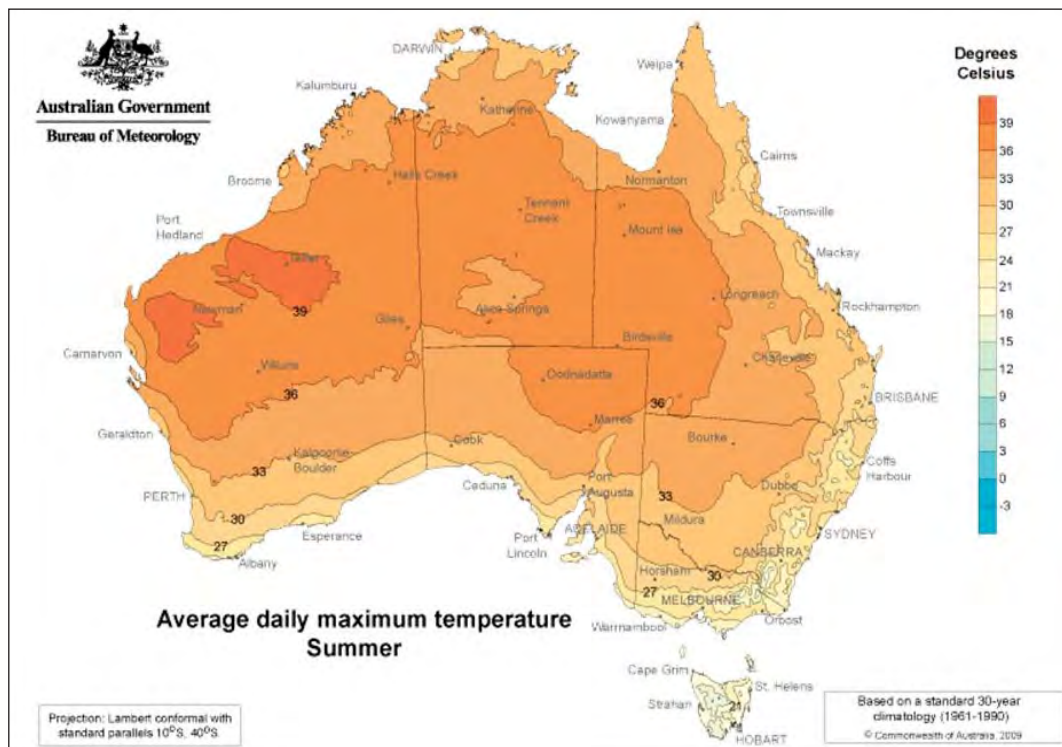


Figure 7: Roebourne is Australia's hottest regional prison.¹²

- 2.48 While it is true that some prisoners would not have air-conditioning in their own homes and could be said to be acclimatised to the heat, many of these have other ways of controlling heat, methods not available to them at RRP, for example by sleeping in open areas. Many of the prisoners certainly do live in air-conditioned homes on the outside and are greatly discomforted by the conditions at Roebourne Regional Prison, and extreme heat events may well be deleterious to the health of some. This Office has consistently over the years expressed concern about the lack of remediation to this issue at RRP most recently in the report of the 2010 inspection:

All this Office can do is to repeat, yet again, that the current situation is intolerable and inhumane. The heat can be ferocious, and the conditions pose risks to the health and safety of prisoners, especially as many of them have health problems such as diabetes. If the State is to adequately meet its duty of care, adequate climate control is a necessity not an option.¹³

12 Bureau of Meteorology, retrieved from: http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/ncc/climate_averages/temperature/index.jsp?maptype=1&period=sum. Used in accord with BOM's copyright policy.

13 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) v. See also 12–15, [2.30]–[2.38] and Recommendation 5. References to earlier reports appear at 12, footnote 41. This Office also commenced in October 2013 a review entitled *Thermal Conditions in Western Australian Prisons* which will include scientific measurement of cell conditions at RRP and other facilities. It is due to be published in January 2015.

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- 2.49 DCS supported in principle a recommendation to install climatic temperature controls in cells and explore and implement other measures to reduce the impact of the harsh climate, stating that ‘various options are continually being explored and will be implemented within available budget resources’.¹⁴ In developing its Action Plan, DCS noted previous installations of air conditioning in the (now former) women’s and maximum-security yards in 2008 and of extra shade sails in the medium-security yard in 2009 and the provision of desk fans in cells in 2009.¹⁵ The only other idea documented was misting sprays, rejected because of clogging due to the high calcium content of the water. In reality a number of other measures could be considered, including:
- Provision of air-conditioned indoor spaces for prisoners at work, education and in their units;
 - Increased greenery and water features in all units;
 - Insulation of cyclone shutters;
 - Installation of water coolers in units; and
 - Changing routines to make better use of cooler evenings, for example, a siesta period combined with later lockups.
- 2.50 A business case to install air conditioning in cells was developed in 2011 and considered by the Commissioner’s Executive Team (CET) in June 2012. CET did not support the proposal and removed the item from the Department’s strategic asset plan. In January 2013, the question of climate control across all facilities was identified as an issue by CET, but considered of ‘low relative priority’ so it was decided not to request that it be considered in the 2013/14 forward estimates period.¹⁶

Recommendation 4

Install suitable climatic controls to reduce air temperatures and to increase cool air circulation in prisoners’ cells at Roebourne Regional Prison.

Recommendation 5

Provide other measures to help mitigate the impact of the harsh climate, including provision of air-conditioned indoor spaces for prisoners at work (as appropriate), education and in their units.

14 Ibid, 67.

15 DCS, *Action Plan Template*; OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011), Recommendation 5. As at 30/01/2013.

16 Ibid.

STAYING IN TOUCH (VISITS AND COMMUNICATION)

- 2.51 While telephones and letter writing supplies are available to prisoners, the small number of telephones limits access and their placements can impede privacy, with only two telephones available for prisoners in the yards of most units. Prisoners organise the schedule of telephone calls amongst themselves. We heard no reports of any problems or conflicts arising from this arrangement.
- 2.52 Most prisoners we spoke to were happy with their access to telephones. However, one prisoner did advise that because people line up to use them, the wait can be long (45 minutes for example) and prisoners waiting can overhear conversations happening on the telephone. Some kind of waitlisting system, and proper phone booths to provide privacy should be considered.
- 2.53 Prisoners have good access to mail, and are supplied with necessary materials on request to unit officers. The yellow envelopes for confidential mail to complaints authorities were also readily available and prisoners did not express concern that these would be opened or interfered with by staff.
- 2.54 The prison facilitates visits with family and friends and does not unduly restrict access to visits. Sentenced prisoners can have two hours of visits per week, and those hours can be used on different days (Saturday or Sunday) with different visitors if the prisoner so chooses. Remand prisoners and prisoners temporarily transferred to the prison for the purpose of visits can have visits every day.
- 2.55 Visitors reported positive experiences with the prison. The prison shows flexibility to maximise the chances of visits going ahead, for example, a box of thongs are kept at the gatehouse which visitors can borrow as required to meet the footwear requirements. The booking officers will take bookings outside of the advertised booking hours if required, and the gatehouse will let visitors who arrive late have their visits if they have travelled a long way, or there are other extenuating circumstances. The officer we spoke to in visits demonstrated a good appreciation for the importance of visits to prisoners. However, we heard no evidence that visitors who have travelled a long way are allowed visits beyond the two hour limit.
- 2.56 Prisoners are allowed direct contact with their visitors unless there is a security related reason not to allow this. The visits officer reported that non-contact visits are only implemented where there has been a security breach, for example a prisoner has been subjected to a non-contact period following possession or use of an unauthorised substance. There is a single non-contact visit room available, but if there are two at once, one will take place across an outdoor table in which a clear plastic screen has been fitted. This is less than ideal for security and exposes the parties involved to embarrassment.¹⁷
- 2.57 A small visitor's reception room is placed outside the gatehouse. It is unstaffed, was opened only 15 minutes before the visit time and lacks any amenities for visitors other than tables and chairs which were stacked and an air-conditioner which was not turned on. A water cooler is installed under the veranda where there were bench seats available.

17 This information reflects what we were told at the time of the inspection, but in the response to the draft report DCS states: 'There are no non-contact visits conducted outside of the non-contact cubicle.'

2.58 The visiting facility within the prison provides a diversity of meeting areas including:

- A small inside area, air-conditioned with a workspace for the supervising prison officer in one corner and a water cooler. There were two kidney-shaped tables and two low tables with loose chairs and a non-contact visit room. Prisoners with a higher security rating or supervision level have their visits in this area.
- Adjacent to this is a patio area, with seven picnic and kidney-shaped tables and a fenced off children's play area. This has a small plastic play setting with a slide, and a large TV where videos/DVDs are screened for the children to watch.
- Outside the patio area is an outdoor area with six fixed kidney-shaped tables in a garden setting with trees. One of these is the one to which a screen may be fitted to facilitate a non-contact visit.



Figure 8: The outdoor visits area.

2.59 There are some compensatory arrangements available to prisoners from remote communities whose loved ones may find it difficult to visit the prison. Prisoners from remote areas whose family and friends may find it difficult to visit are able to make video tapes to send home; but this has rarely been done, the technology is obsolete and it is no longer seen as useful. There is also an additional \$7.20 per week telephone allowance available to help those living remotely from their homes, which prisoners say is inadequate, not least because of the expense of calling mobile phones.

- 2.60 As with most other prisons, a videolink system was originally installed to facilitate video-visits with relatives but is almost exclusively used for court purposes. In a 12-month period to 30 September 2013, there were only ten video-visits for which prisoners were charged.¹⁸ Roebourne Prison was scoped in late 2011 for installation of a Skype kiosk which would have been used to assist prisoner communication with their lawyers and hopefully also for virtual video visits with approved family or friends. However, funding to proceed with the installation was not forthcoming.

FINDING SUPPORT

- 2.61 The Department of Corrective Services has implemented a range of interventions aimed at reducing suicide. According to the DCS Suicide Prevention Strategy, these include such measures as a structured day; an anti-bullying policy; reception screening; orientation after reception; the provision of mental health staff; peer support schemes; chaplaincy; the Aboriginal Visitors Scheme (for Aboriginal prisoners); and infrastructure (crisis care, modified ligature free cells, and ligature point reduction in accommodation blocks). RRP lacks some elements of this strategy, but the results of the prisoner survey were encouraging insofar as prisoners appeared to invest quite high levels of trust in a number of the staff and services in their environment.

Table 3: Sources of help or support for prisoners (ranked from most to least trusted)

	2013 (%)	2010 (%)	WA (%)
Who prisoners would trust to support them if they had an issue			
Prison Support Officer	85	23	25
Peer Support prisoners	85	51	44
Other prisoners	72	n/a	n/a
Health centre staff	67	n/a	n/a
Aboriginal Visitor Scheme (AVS)	66	14	21
Chaplain	62	n/a	n/a
Psychologist (PCS)	54	n/a	n/a
Independent visitor	50	22	29
Unit officer	49	50	43
Industrial officers (VSO)	45	n/a	n/a
Prison management	40	14	22
ACCESS	37	9	24
External agency (eg Ombudsman)	28	14	26

18 From information downloaded from the TOMS database operated by DCS on 9 October 2013.

Peer Support

- 2.62 The high regard for the Prison Support Officer (PSO) and the Peer Support program which is facilitated by the PSO is especially pleasing. In the 2010 inspection it was found that PSO position was filled ‘but incumbent absent due to unresolved issues’.¹⁹ Shortly after that inspection DCS filled the position on contract with a fly-in-fly-out basis from Perth and it was fully 12 months before local accommodation was provided. In the meantime he has had to endure contracts of varying duration, and was only provided the opportunity to apply permanently for the position in July 2013.²⁰
- 2.63 Nevertheless, the Peer Support program has remained quite strong and is used by the prison management at times as a way of consulting prisoners and of communicating policy change. Peer supporters, who tend to be clustered in Unit 2, latterly including in the enhanced privilege wing, generally have good freedom of movement into other wings, including the maximum yard, and to a lesser degree, the residual women’s yard to provide support to other prisoners. As we noted above, a Reception worker is a peer supporter, able to offer a friendly greeting to newcomers and in recent months, another peer supporter has been providing an essential component in the prisoner orientation process.
- 2.64 In order to facilitate the work of peer support in orientation and in helping prisoners with their parole plans and other official correspondence, the prison has made an office equipped with a standalone computer and printer available to the peer support program, adjacent to that used by the PSO.

Aboriginal Visitors Scheme

- 2.65 In contrast to the PSO and peer support program the continued high level of trust placed by prisoners in AVS is bewildering. The 2010 inspection found it had not been functioning for almost two years and recommended that DCS ‘ensure the Aboriginal Visitor Scheme has a consistent and effective presence at Roebourne Regional Prison and also at all other prisons (including coverage for any lengthy absence).’²¹
- 2.66 However, AVS has functioned at RRP only for brief periods in the last three years and there were no visits since April 2013. Individuals have had long absences not notified to the prison either for personal reasons or due to unresolved issues with prison management. For example, prison management would not allow AVS staff attending by themselves to have contact with prisoners at large during recreation time, citing security and safety reasons; however, AVS staff were not at all happy to be confined to an office away from the units or recreation area.²²

19 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 50, [7.5].

20 An appointment was eventually made only in December 2013.

21 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 20–21, [4.2]–[4.7] and Recommendation 9.

22 In response to a draft report, DCS stated: “The restriction of AVS staff not allowing them to attend by themselves and walk around the prison is a sanction by their Manager, not the prison.” Prison management prioritised construction of additional interview rooms in units to facilitate AVS and other services in a recent business case. DCS head office declined funding due to budgetary restrictions.

- 2.67 The absence of AVS means a significant loss of support from local Aboriginal people that prisoners trust, and of valuable community information about family, friends and deaths in the community. Many local Aboriginal people have trouble expressing themselves and AVS can have a valuable role in assisting prisoner communication with staff. It is regrettable that AVS management in Perth have again proven incapable of resolving these issues in the Pilbara. Perhaps it is time to consider other solutions, such as a devolution of management to the local Community Corrections or Youth Justice manager, or other partner agency in the Pilbara. Enthusiastic new AVS workers also need to be recruited. In the meantime, a fly-in-fly-out solution should be considered, but this would really only be effective if the staff had strong Pilbara ties.

Recommendation 6

Consider means to revitalise and sustain an effective Aboriginal Visitor Scheme at Roebourne Regional Prison.

Chaplaincy

- 2.68 A local Pastor and his wife are respectively the Chaplain and Assistant Chaplain to RRP. The Pastor provides a multi-faith service to prisoners each Sunday and they visit during the week to provide pastoral care. The Assistant Chaplain attends on Mondays to see the women, and has helped provide craft activities for the women. The prison was without a Women's Support Officer for 12 months before their main yard was closed and the Chaplain provided invaluable support to the women during that time. Since then the few women residents have been very isolated in their yard, with few activities or services, so Chaplaincy continues to play an essential role.
- 2.69 The Chaplains have also played an important role counselling prisoners and staff facing grief issues or other life issues. Few prisoners today can attend funerals outside the prison, and Chaplains are one of the few supports available to assist prisoners express or manage their grief at such times. Chaplains liaise with grieving family outside the prison and offer to arrange sorry time or a special service inside the prison.
- 2.70 However, Chaplains are concerned that communication from the prison is haphazard, and they often only become aware of grieving prisoners some days after the death. There are sensitivities surrounding the sharing of confidential information, but Chaplaincy is a well-established institution in WA prisons with well-established protocols. Some kind of MoU is needed between prison management about the nature of and timely transmission of information essential to their role.

Other Risk Management and Support Systems

- 2.71 The At Risk Management System (ARMS) is a multi-disciplinary case management system for the identification, monitoring and management of prisoners identified as at risk to self.²³ At RRP there were no patients on ARMS at the time of the inspection, and in the three-year period to 30 September 2013, there were just nine recorded incidents involving self-harm, two of which were classified as serious. There were no incidents classified as suicides or attempted suicides.
- 2.72 Prisoner Risk Assessment Group (known as PRAG) meetings are held as required as long as an at-risk person is managed on ARMS. Unlike most other prisons, RRP lacks comorbidity or psychiatric input to the PRAG, although a Senior Programs Officer/ Prison Counsellor is usually a participant, together with custodial staff, nursing staff and the Prison Support Officer. Risk is managed in part by formal and informal peer support between imprisoned family members. The ARMS policy requires that those identified as acute cases are managed in isolation in a sterile observation cell. Ironically, this can thereby serve to increase the risk if it removes people from family support that would otherwise be available in times of crisis.
- 2.73 The Support and Monitoring System (SAMS) is a collaborative case management system providing a coordinated approach to the identification and management of prisoners who are not an acute risk to self but who require additional support, intervention and monitoring.²⁴ Such people include mental health patients being managed on medication and others with various forms of intellectual impairment. These cases are subject to regular case conferences within the prison involving the same people as with PRAG.
- 2.74 There were nine people on SAMS at the time of the inspection but no evidence of regular SAMS reviews. Two recently admitted young people with apparent mental health issues had not been identified as requiring management under SAMS. Staff expressed concern that one of these was not being managed consistently or always appropriately, given his condition. Management accepted that SAMS may be the appropriate vehicle to formulate a case plan for staff to follow and convened a SAMS meeting at the end of the inspection week.
- 2.75 Unit staff are an important source of support for many prisoners and of course are on the frontline for the identification of risks or actual attempts at self-harm. This has to be balanced with other disciplinary and security roles, so it is not surprising that the level of trust shown in the prisoner survey is lower than most other potential sources of support. It is encouraging to note that over twenty officers had the opportunity in mid-2012 to participate in the Gatekeeper training program along with DCS staff from Community and Youth Justice from across the Pilbara.
- 2.76 This training was designed to increase awareness and understanding of suicidal or self-harming behaviour and would have significantly boosted the knowledge and confidence of those who were able to participate. Regrettably, RRP have failed to release staff to participate in Mental Health First Aid training at the Corrective Service Academy, which would provide an awareness and understanding of a broader range of mental health conditions (see also below at 4.24 and 6.53).

23 DCS, *At Risk Management System (ARMS) Manual*, Clinical Governance Unit (1998, updated 2013),

24 DCS, *Support and Monitoring System (SAMS) Manual*, Clinical Governance Unit (2009).

KEEPING FIT AND HANGING OUT (RECREATION)

2.77 In a prison, such as Roebourne, with a low rate of meaningful employment, education and programs, it is particularly important that there be a strong recreation program to provide structured activity and help sustain health and fitness. While the prison has two VSOs with responsibility for recreation, who provide seven days per week coverage between them when not on leave, these staff are also responsible for the library, and the canteen, which takes up most of their time. As a result the prison can only offer limited organised recreation activities. The lack of organised activity was a key concern expressed by the prisoners we spoke to during the inspection, and in the prisoner survey, where 52 per cent of respondents reported that they had poor access to recreation, and 54 per cent rated access to organised sport as poor. The latter result is significantly worse than the 43 per cent state average.

Table 4: Roebourne prisoner survey 2013 – canteen, recreation and library²⁵

Considered Good:	2013 (%)	2010 (%)	WA (%)
Canteen	72	75	59
Amount of organised sport	46	45	57
Access to other recreation	48	54	51
Access to library	71	64	66

- 2.78 Recreation at Roebourne refers to the free-time before and after dinner during the week and throughout the day on weekends. During these periods, prisoners have the opportunity to engage in activities such as socialising with others, smoking, reading, playing guitar, writing letters, playing cards, darts or table tennis (in some wings), watching television, sleeping, painting or walking around their unit, the quadrangle or oval (if open).
- 2.79 A small set of basic gym equipment comprising a rusting exercise bike, boxing ball and half a dozen isometric items can be found in a corner of the main quadrangle, which also has a basketball court which can be converted into a tennis court. The only fitness equipment available within the units is that which was left behind in what was the women's yard, now the enhanced privilege yard. The prison lacks an indoor gymnasium, essential at least during summer months in such a hot climate.
- 2.80 There is also a half-oval. Football was reported to be the most popular recreation activity amongst prisoners at least during winter months. We observed a rather strange version of Australian rules football in which both teams played into the same set of goals posts due to the short size of the oval. During season, games are played between the four teams on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Practices may also be held during the week and the oval is also used by some people for walking.

25 OICS pre-inspection survey, July 2013. Figures for 2013 and 2010 are from Roebourne prisoner surveys only. The Average column is the average responses from surveys of all adult prisons in WA over the previous three years.

- 2.81 However, the condition of the oval has been a constant problem over the last few years and the oval was unable to be used for long periods. It had only recently reopened at the time of the inspection, but the condition of the turf was observably poor, with large sandy patches that posed a risk to safety. Prison management were aware of the problem with the oval and have advised that the oval needs professional turf replacement, which the prison cannot afford. The prison has made numerous attempts to improve the condition of the oval using internal resources but these attempts have never been entirely satisfactory.



Figure 9: Unsafe turf on prison oval.

- 2.82 Even when the oval is usable, access was dependant on the availability of recreation and custodial staff and prompt attendance by prisoners. If staff numbers are down or insufficient interest was shown, then the oval was closed. The ability to open the oval in the afternoon recreation period was further compromised by the recent change of canteen opening times which were changed to coincide with recreation times on Tuesday and Friday afternoons (see paragraph 2.103 below).
- 2.83 Football and basketball matches are largely self-organised by the prisoners with recreation staff making equipment available and organising occasional bingo matches, and swimming or fishing excursions for some of the minimum-security prisons which is greatly appreciated by those who participate. There is no published recreation program at Roebourne to attract participation nor are there activities targeted at groups with different needs, for example,

older prisoners.²⁶ There are aspects of Aboriginal culture which could also provide the basis for meaningful recreation for some prisoners throughout the year, for example, cultural music, dance, art, cultural food preparation, not just during annual NAIDOC celebrations.

- 2.84 More generally we had complaints that prisoners were unable to access band equipment, something in the past that was available during afternoon recreation. The prison has a number of fine artists who have to work in their cells, if not in a school program. An art room available during recreation would likely be well used. Regular Unit BBQs used to provide a welcome respite from the routine but have not been held for almost three years.
- 2.85 In summary, the recreation infrastructure at Roebourne is wholly inadequate for safe year-round active participation and facilities for passive recreation should also be considerably improved. The oval must be made safe and consideration be given to establishing an indoor gymnasium/activity centre. Fitness equipment needs updating, and some should be provided in every yard. There should also be attention to staffing arrangements (including prisoner workers) to develop the recreation program to increase prisoner participation, fitness and skill development.

Recommendation 7

Develop a recreation development plan for RRP giving consideration to promotion of fitness and healthy lifestyles involving all prisoner cohorts; training and employment opportunities for prisoners; creating an indoor recreation facility; enhancing in-unit fitness and recreation options; cultural participation and development, including dedicated spaces for art and music; access to the library including electronic resources; and community links.

HAVING A READ OR A LOOK (LIBRARY)

- 2.86 In the past, the Roebourne prison library has often been a hive of activity, in contrast to many prison libraries. It is directly accessible from the main quadrangle and as noted above, is the only air-conditioned space available to prisoners during recreation time. However, its collection is limited and aging, established systems for renewal and exchange via the Casuarina prison library having stalled. It was closed during the inspection for refurbishment and prison management had recently developed a new partnership with the Shire which it was hoped would provide for an exchange of books and hopefully other materials that would refresh the collection.
- 2.87 The high level of satisfaction with access to the library (see table above) predates its closure for refurbishment and also the change in the canteen times which means that recreation staff will probably be unable to open the library on Tuesday and Friday afternoons.

26 In response to the draft report, DCS forwarded a one page “Roebourne Regional Prison Recreation Plan 2013” which had a weekly program of activities and recreation events during the year and at Christmas. This was not provided when documents relating to recreation were requested in July 2013, nor in conversation with relevant staff during the inspection, nor was it on display in the prison at that time.

FINDING NEW HORIZONS IN SPORT (V SWANS)

- 2.88 Roebourne Regional Prison was fortunate indeed in 2013 to have had the opportunity to participate in the New Horizons program of V Swans, which is the community development division of the Swan Districts Football Club. New Horizons are engaged with a range of different groups and agencies in the Pilbara, but its partnership with RRP followed their successful partnerships with Wooroloo Prison and Banksia Hill Detention Centre in Perth. Twenty prisoners at a time had opportunity to participate in programs inside the prison, with some able to join the Wickham Rovers football squad for training and playing in matches and others helping to officiate at matches.
- 2.89 The in-prison program included a focus on relevant health and lifeskills, level-one AFL umpiring accreditation, sports medicine training and first-aid certification. Fitness training and football coaching was also provided, albeit in the limited space available in the recreation quadrangle, the oval having been out of action for much of the year.
- 2.90 At a time when there has been so limited education, training, programs and employment in RRP, the New Horizons program was been strongly embraced by prisoners and places in the program were keenly sought. While only a handful of prisoners typically played in matches for the Wickham Wolves, the prison's involvement made it one of the most competitive clubs in the competition, and increased the profile of the prison in the community. It appears to have given meaning and purpose to a number of prisoners, and there were reports of prisoners continuing their involvement after release.

EXPRESSING ONESELF (BIG HART)

- 2.91 Big hART is a Tasmanian-based not-for-profit organisation which is: 'committed to the arts and social change'. In 2010, with sponsorship from mining companies and federal government, it established the Yijala Yala Project in Roebourne, described as 'a long-term, inter-generational, multi-platform, arts project'.²⁷ Like New Horizons, it works with local schools and other community agencies as well as RRP.
- 2.92 Since November 2010, Big hART has been attending RRP through education services, where it has provided workshops and recording sessions for prisoners, including a focus on literacy, teamwork, recording skills and music industry knowledge. Project highlights included a visit in June 2012 of lecturers from RMIT who gave poetry workshops and the production later that year of two CDs of music by RRP prisoners. These songs were rooted in the personal and cultural experiences of the participants with some in traditional languages. A number of tracks have since been played on radio stations across the North-West.

27 <http://www.yijalayala.bighart.org/>



Figure 10: Prisoner CDs produced by Big hART.

2.93 Big hART also involved RRP prisoners, along with members from the local community and with input from a number of high profile artists, in creating a CD album 'Murru' launched in Fremantle on 29 September 2013 as a memorial to the 30th anniversary of the death of John Pat, a 16-year-old local, in a police cell in Roebourne on 28 September 1983. The involvement of Big hART with prisoners at RRP generated considerable coverage by the media over a period of time, both locally and at state level, including on ABC television. It has been a tremendous driver for personal development for some of those who have been involved, and a source of pride for the individuals involved, and the prison more generally. The project has also provided an important cultural connection between those participating in the prison and those in the community, and will hopefully make a significant difference in the rehabilitation of some of the participants.

NURTURING THE SPIRIT

2.94 The following table shows the responses of RRP prisoners when asked to specify their religion when they were admitted to prison. Only 40 per cent indicated a religious affiliation, mainly either Catholic or any one of a number of other Christian faiths. Just four expressed that they considered their traditional culture to be their religion, although the antiquated category name ‘tribal’ is unlikely to have captured those with loyalty to traditional belief systems. In truth, some people show affinity for both Western and traditional belief systems.

*Table 5: Religion as given at admission*²⁸

Response	Number	Per cent (%)
Catholic	27	16.9
Other Christian	33	20.6
Tribal	4	2.5
Atheist/no religion	74	46.3
Not specified/other	22	13.8
Total	160	100.0

2.95 A weekly service is provided by the Prison Chaplain each Sunday and certain other occasions. They are held in the visits centre and attract up to 15 prisoners. Significant holidays such as Christmas, Easter and ANZAC day are also celebrated and services are held outside, which Aboriginal prisoners tend to prefer. Female prisoners used to be allowed to attend services but since their main yard was closed, they have been excluded. This is a policy that contravenes human rights and must be reversed.²⁹

Recommendation 8

Allow women prisoners to attend religious services.

2.96 Religious artefacts and literature, including Manga bibles, are provided through the chaplaincy on request from prisoners, within security limitations. They appear genuinely prepared to assist people from any faith background, although this is rarely tested at Roebourne. The Chaplains also participate in Aboriginal celebrations such as NAIDOC week.

2.97 However, there are arguably a range of spiritual practices and cultural obligations that are important to Aboriginal people that they cannot practice. These include funeral attendance, and preparation of cultural meals.

28 Data downloaded from TOMS, as at 25/10/2013. The ‘Not specified/other group’ included one person who categorised as ‘other religions’ and another categorised as ‘other response’

29 In response to the draft text, DCS stated: “Female prisoners have not been stopped from attending religious services.” This is contrary to information received at the time of the inspection.

HAVING A SPEND (GRATS/CANTEEN)

- 2.98 Money earned via the gratuity system can be used to spend on phone calls to family and friends, on treats or necessities from the canteen, or saved up for bigger items like sports shoes, musical instruments, and music or games systems. A few prisoners also manage to accumulate savings to help with their reintegration back into society. The amount paid per week accords to the gratuity level payable for a particular position held in the employment scheme, and is further discussed in Chapter 5.
- 2.99 According to the TOMS system, a sum of \$301,721.49 was distributed to prisoners at Roebourne in the 12 months to 30 September 2013. During the same period, some \$77,055.52 was transferred into prisoner phone accounts, \$185,772.86 was spent through the canteen, \$3,864.00 deducted towards the cost of providing in-cell TVs and \$32,609.63 was paid out on exit from the prison. Prisoner funds were expended in various other ways in lesser amounts, including for fines, restitution, damage, money orders for documents or license fees and so on.

Table 6: Weekly gratuity payments by level

Level	Gratuity (\$)
1	65.45
2	50.05
3	39.27
4	27.79
5	20.58
6	0.00

- 2.100 Upon entry, new prisoners are paid at Level 5 if they say they would be willing to work if offered a job. Most unit based jobs are classed as Miscellaneous workers, which is also paid at level 5, at just \$20.58 per week. On the Wednesday of the inspection week, 65 of 169 prisoners were being paid at level 5. Prisoners are expected to pay \$1 per week from their gratuities for their TVs, and their families rightly expect to receive calls which cost a considerable amount if only contactable by mobile. Almost all RRP prisoners are smokers and the cheapest pack of smokes costs \$20.72, and the cheapest pouch of tobacco \$24.45. In other words, prisoners on Level 5 gratuities cannot possibly afford to pay for their TV privileges, phone calls and smokes on their weekly earnings.
- 2.101 The prison canteen is well stocked and had a really good range of products in most categories, including electrical items formerly obtained through town spends. Town spends have been taken out of the hands of canteen staff which has proven more efficient and reduced the burden. However, like most prison canteens it is overburdened by confectionary, soda drinks and tobacco products, and lacks any fresh foodstuff. The so-called medicated category has only the three different levels of nicotine patches and chelated magnesium tablets. Other prisons may allow items like cotton buds, bandaids, antacids, vitamins and basic analgesics to be sold.

- 2.102 Another area of complaint was that ordinary Coca-Cola had been removed from sale as a health initiative, in favour of artificially sweetened varieties. While this attempted to address a serious health issue, it makes little sense given the number of other normally sugared sodas and confectionary still available.³⁰
- 2.103 Only two months before the inspection, canteen times had been changed from early to late afternoons on Tuesday and Fridays. Prisoners were upset that the change left them hanging for smokes until later in the day and that any issue with their account, could not be resolved so late in the day, leaving them short for a further three or four days. We understand that the reason for the change was not to distract prisoners from their employment and training despite so few being so engaged. This seems reasonable, but should be reviewed after a while in the light of expressed prisoner concerns.

Table 7: RRP canteen expenditures 01/10/2012 to 30/09/2013³¹

Category	Sales (\$)	Per cent (%)
Art supplies	1,833.01	0.77
Biscuits	16,171.53	6.80
Cigarettes	130,307.44	54.83
Confectionary	20,685.92	8.70
Drinks	26,762.19	11.26
Electrical items	23,576.56	9.92
Magazines	2,325.53	0.98
Medicated items	307.26	0.13
Stationery	216.20	0.09
Sundries	15,476.34	6.51
Total	237,661.98	100.00

- 2.104 The above table shows canteen expenditures by category in the 12 months to 30/09/2013. The outstanding fact is the level of expenditure by prisoners on tobacco and related products (which are all included in the 'Cigarettes' category), at \$130,307.44, which was 54.8 per cent of all money spent in the canteen for the year. This was almost four times more than the money prisoners took home as exit payouts. This tobacco-driven financial impoverishment will only get worse as the Federal Government implements the former government's decision to increase tobacco excise by 12.5 per cent per annum over four years commencing on 1 December 2013.³²

30 Women in the past have also complained at the narrow range of products for their specific needs.

31 Data downloaded from TOMS on 24/10/2013.

32 Hockey, J. & Sinodonis, A. (2013). Restoring integrity in the Australian tax system, Media Release, Commonwealth of Australia, 6 November 2013 (downloaded from: <http://jbh.ministers.treasury.gov.au/media-release/017-2013/>). The excise will also be increased annually based on any increases in the average weekly earnings.

- 2.105 One may note the mismatch between the amount of gratuities reportedly spent through the canteen above and the total sales shown in the table above. This is because families provide considerable extra funds to supplement a prisoner's canteen spending, to help pay for a town spend (such as an X-box system or runners), or to help with phone costs. Many families of prisoners are already impoverished and it can be difficult to raise the cash, but most are keen to help to some degree. Prisoners are sometimes heard on the telephone system pleading (or demanding) for families to bring extra money. Some make little effort to find work, knowing their families will put in for them. There have also been concerns that contraband, such as drugs or art work has been traded in the prison and paid for by one family paying significant amounts to another for payment into a prisoner's canteen account.
- 2.106 Prison management are keenly aware of such issues and have developed new procedures. The procedures are contained in an amended Local Order 26 dated August 2013 which essentially limits the amount prisoners can receive into their private cash or phone account to the amount for which they are eligible under the gratuities system. Additional funds may be received, if approved, for town spends. However, the critical point is that funds are not accepted at the gate or by mail if the prisoner has not submitted a yellow Money Request Form for processing within their unit in time to have arrived at the gate before the relevant visit, or mail item. The form requires the prisoner to specify how much will be received, from whom and to which purpose(s) the money is to be applied. Visitors must also specify how they want the money spent.
- 2.107 The requirement to submit this form was perhaps the biggest source of discontent expressed to inspectors during the 2013 inspection. Prisoners say they have to be submitted five days before an anticipated visit to ensure it is at the gate on time and claim that even so it has sometimes been mislaid, or processed too late. They said it was impossible for their families to know so far in advance how much they will be able to spare when visiting. Filling in forms of any kind is difficult for many who are functionally illiterate. There were numerous tales of money being refused, or frozen and unable to be used, or simply returned, to families on far-flung communities because their intentions were unclear or the prisoner didn't know it was coming.
- 2.108 These rules are well intentioned and the inspection occurred just as prisoners were having to get used to the new system, but they did seem unnecessarily cumbersome and complex. It is appropriate that a prisoner specifically refusing to work, or temporarily disabled from working as a consequence of misbehaviour, should not be given help, but it is not at all clear that families of those on higher gratuity levels should be 'allowed', or expected to pay more towards canteen spend than other families.
- 2.109 Only certain local prisoners receive frequent visits. Surely the point is not how much can be received but how the money may be applied, in particular for canteen spends. A modest amount could automatically be applied each week for canteen spends and/or phone expenses. It has long been expected that prisoners receiving extra funds for a town spend be required to complete a form, and that may be necessary, but it is questionable whether it is really necessary to get a form completed and processed on each and every occasion family wish to make a deposit at the gate.

2.110 Arrangements also mitigate against prisoners wanting to save money towards their release. Prisoners have the opportunity to commit to saving a percentage of their gratuities as savings. If they choose at some point not to continue this arrangement, for example, to accumulate money for a town spend, the funds are frozen and they are not allowed to resume saving in future. This may be acceptable for a short-term prisoner, but wholly unreasonably for those staying longer. In general a more flexible and transparent savings system is needed. A further disincentive to saving is that anyone with over \$200 in their account is no longer eligible for the out-of-country telephone allowance.

Recommendation 9

Simplify rules and procedures relating to the receipt and use of money by prisoners from outside sources and remove barriers and disincentives for prisoners wishing to save.

GETTING ON WITH STAFF (PRISONER STAFF RELATIONS, CULTURAL RESPECT)

2.111 Staff in the pre-inspection staff survey showed confidence in their relations with prisoners, with 82 per cent agreeing that custodial staff and prisoners related generally well. Eighty seven per cent also considered they had a generally good relationship with indigenous prisoners and 78 per cent said staff were respectful of indigenous culture. While prisoner views on their relations with staff were less positive, the prisoner survey (see table below) did indicate a significant improvement since 2010 in their relations with unit staff. On the other hand there are concerning declines in prisoner views on their relations with other staff at RRP.

Table 8: Roebourne prisoner survey 2013 – prisoner views on staff

	2013 (%)	2010 (%)	WA (%)
Consider they get along well with:			
Industrial Officers (VSO)	57	77	79
Unit officers	50	28	59
Prison management	40	67	54
Other staff (eg health, programs)	60	79	75
Agree that officers:			
Apply the rules fairly	39	45	54
Are respectful during cell searches	40	36	55
Use too much force	50	41	58
Treat prisoners with dignity	32	46	47
Feel that staff:			
Understand their culture	31	30	48
Respect and recognise their culture	33	39	49

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- 2.112 Despite a more positive view on their relations with unit staff, respondents characterised their treatment by officers less favourably in three out of four measures compared to 2010, and significantly less favourably than was the average for prisoners in other facilities over the last three years. It was especially concerning that only 32 per cent considered they were treated with dignity. The inspection found little evidence that officers were actively abusive or disrespectful to prisoners but their degree of interaction with and responsiveness varied greatly. Some appeared to know prisoners well and interact positively with them during their rounds, responding positively to their questions or requests. A few were seen having good conversations with prisoners in the smoking shelters or around the control area.
- 2.113 However, prisoners felt that many staff were disinterested and unresponsive to their questions or concerns. They were often told to come back later, and were given little sense when they would be given a response to their concerns. Being prisoners, they are powerless to address most of their questions and concerns through other means. It is acknowledged that prisoners themselves often fail to express themselves in the best possible way and at times can be impatient and demanding. It may be the case that relations have been affected by a sense of neglect or lack of purpose, in an environment that presently provides so little meaningful activity or opportunity and less than satisfactory living conditions.
- 2.114 It is also concerning to see in the survey results above a feeling by prisoners that staff have little understanding, respect or recognition for the culture of the prisoners, particularly when compared to other facilities. Other than the weekly 'cultural meal', prepared in the kitchen and the annual NAIDOC celebration, there is little acknowledgement at RRP that it accommodates people rooted in one of the world's oldest living cultures, including some with considerable knowledge and status within that culture. Prisoners thought only one or two officers were interested in Aboriginal culture and were aggrieved that so many staff appeared to take leave during NAIDOC week (especially in 2012). Attendance of RRP prisoners at funerals has become a rare exception over the last 12 months which prisoners also consider a mark of disrespect for their culture (see below).
- 2.115 There are many other opportunities in a regional prison to engender cultural security and maintenance and as discussed above Big hART has been singularly important at Roebourne in this respect. West Kimberley Regional Prison may well demonstrate other ways of pursuing such agendas. However, in terms of staff prisoner relations, the Department's failure in recent years to deliver Pilbara-specific cultural awareness training to staff at Roebourne is a significant failure which must be corrected (see below 6.51).

PAYING OUR RESPECTS (SORRY BUSINESS)

- 2.116 The Roebourne cemetery is adjacent to the prison and the prison has traditionally taken a liberal attitude to participation by prisoners in local funerals of close relatives. It is logistically much more difficult and expensive to mount a funeral escort to some parts of the Pilbara, but in the past the Department nevertheless accepted an obligation to assist a prisoner attend a funeral of a demonstrably close relative.
- 2.117 However, as documented in a recent report from this office, Departmental policy has shifted dramatically to the point that participation in a funeral is now very restricted. Evidence that cultural obligations absolutely require participation by a prisoner at a funeral of a person who is not their actual mother, father, sister, brother, daughter or son is no longer accepted. Decisions about applications to attend funerals are made at head office often notwithstanding the views of local prison management.

Table 9: Authorised absences from Roebourne Regional Prison to 20 Sept 2013³³

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
33	44	44	55	26	27	3

- 2.118 The above data from the Department's TOMS system shows the impact of these changes with just three Roebourne prisoners allowed to attend so far in 2013 at time of the inspection. This causes a lot of pain and anguish for Aboriginal prisoners. A case in 2012 is a good example of the inhumanity of the increasing restrictiveness of the funeral policy. A prisoner in Roebourne was not allowed to support her daughter at the funeral of her first and only grandchild on the grounds that she did not have an established relationship with the grandchild. Of course, she had been intimately involved with the child's gestation through her daughter's frequent visits to the prison.
- 2.119 In another example, a prisoner was unable to attend the local funeral of his aunt, a respected elder, who was regarded culturally as his older sister and to whom he was very close. Despite there being a number of other family members in the prison, her family had asked prison management that only one other prisoner attend, effectively representing a much larger group at the funeral. Head office was insensitive to these circumstances and by denying his application, brought shame not only on the individual within his own family, but on the whole prison community that showed such disrespect.

33 This data category includes any visits to a morbidly ill relative – such visits are exceedingly rare.

2.120 Prison management attempts to mitigate the effect of refusals on prisoners in various ways, ideally including:

- Instructing officers to immediately inform the prisoner of a rejected application;
- Advising prisoners of their right to appeal negative decisions and assisting in that process;³⁴
- Offering the assistance of a Peer Support Team member in sending a condolence letter;
- Inviting family to have a mourning time at the prison with prisoners – this was done in the example of the local elder cited above;
- Providing support as appropriate from Peer Support, Prison Support Officer, Chaplaincy, Prison Counsellor or Aboriginal Visitor; and
- Allowing Pilbara prisoners from other facilities to return to RRP to have ‘sorry time’ through contact with kin within the prison and through family visits.

2.121 In reality, some of these steps have not always followed, for example, we were told that in one particularly sensitive case, the prisoner was only advised of his rejected application the night before the funeral. Other supports have not always been informed and prisoners themselves often reject any help or support in lieu of attendance at the funeral. Nevertheless, we were impressed by efforts by Roebourne management and staff to deal sensitively with grieving prisoners, notwithstanding a regressive Departmental policy on funeral participation by prisoners.

34 The appeal process was clarified in an amendment to Policy Directive 9, (14 October 2013).

Chapter 3

DISPLACING THE WOMEN

A HISTORY OF DISADVANTAGE

- 3.1 Over the past decade, the management and quality of care of women housed at Roebourne Regional Prison has been of serious concern to this Office, particularly in regards to the conditions of their accommodation and their inequitable access to education, employment, programs and other services. Early inspections in 2002 and 2004 revealed that women at Roebourne Regional Prison were severely disadvantaged relative to their counterparts in Perth, and that the conditions they were being held in were contrary to the Department's own strategic aspirations in the management for Aboriginal women in custody.³⁵ The numbers of women accommodated at this time were small, typically five to eight in a prison population of 120 or more.
- 3.2 Despite some positive commitments following these inspections, in its Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody that accompanied the Mahoney Inquiry of 2005, this Office stated that in Roebourne Regional Prison 'the current provision for female prisoners is appalling and it is recommended that urgent and immediate action be taken to develop a minimum-security female release centre to ease this situation and [provide] a venue for the transfer of appropriate life skills'.³⁶
- 3.3 Further progress was acknowledged in the report of the 2006 Inspection including the appointment of a part-time Women's Support Officer (WSO), as well as increased participation by women in employment, training and education, although there remained some unaddressed cultural barriers. Refrigerated air-conditioning had been installed in the cells in the women's yard, the kitchen had been made functional, the mother and baby cell had been upgraded and practice of supplying recycled underwear to newcomers had ceased.³⁷ However, the inspection recommended: further improvement to accommodation conditions, the lifting of education and programs to standards comparable to those provided at Bandyup prison, and that a review of the WSO role be undertaken with a view to it becoming full time.³⁸

CREATION OF A WOMEN'S PRECINCT

- 3.4 The 2010 Inspection found an overcrowded women's yard with 18 women in a dozen cells. As with male prisoners at the time, some slept on mattresses on cell floors, which was considered preferable to being sent to another region.³⁹ An effort had been made to create something of a women's precinct by extending the outdoor yard to incorporate a larger demountable activity room and a garden bed suitable for vegetable growing. Potted shrubs and palms had been placed in the accommodation yard. Participation in education was facilitated but employment was limited, with only three positions available for women to work outside of the female wing. Nor were women permitted to undertake external

35 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 14 (April 2002) 40–41, [4.15]–[4.19] and 105, Recommendation 3. During this period, the Department of Justice was the Department responsible for prisons.

36 OICS, *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*, Report No. 30 (November 2005) 173.

37 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 48 (March 2008) Chapter 7. This inspection was undertaken in November 2006. The Department of Corrective Services was created in January 2006.

38 Ibid, Recommendations 19–22.

39 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) Chapter 5.

DISPLACING THE WOMEN

Section 95 activities including the WorkReady program at DECCA, as the prison considered that additional supervision would be required to facilitate this.

- 3.5 Importantly, a draft Women’s Precinct Management Plan had been created by RRP management to determine how the precinct would operate and ‘to ensure women prisoners are managed by a women’s centred management philosophy that is based on consistent and equitable decision making and rules’.⁴⁰ While the Women’s Substance Use offender program was being provided by programs staff on an annual basis, most other activities, services and personal development programs were dependant by and large on the Women’s Support Officer. Unfortunately this was still part-time and only intermittently filled, which led to a fluctuation of service levels for women prisoners. As a result the need for a full time WSO was once again affirmed in an inspection recommendation.⁴¹



Figure 11: The former women’s yard, now a male enhanced privilege wing.

40 Ibid, 28, [5.10].

41 Ibid, 29, Recommendation 12. This recommendation was supported by DCS and a business case developed.

- 3.6 It was also noted that the prison facilitated a degree of ordinary contact between male and female prisoners, allowing them to study together in certain education classes and to enjoy recreation time together in the main quadrangle and library in the afternoon session and in bingo on Sundays. This freedom of association was being denied male and female prisoners at Greenough Regional Prison and increasingly at Broome Regional Prison. The Office also recommended following this inspection that DCS: ‘Provide services for women in Roebourne Regional Prison that are commensurate with those provided in metropolitan facilities’.⁴²

ROEBOURNE’S FUTURE IN THE WOMEN’S CUSTODIAL ESTATE

- 3.7 A new Women’s Support Officer commenced in March 2011 on a three day per week basis (previously the position had only been two days per week). Soon afterwards, RRP was visited by the Superintendents of both Bandyup Women’s Prison and Boronia Pre-release Centre as part of their reporting on women specific services provided to female offenders at regional prisons where both male and female prisoners are co-managed.⁴³ They found that while the women’s section at Roebourne was rather austere, the women appeared to engage well with staff, and were aware of the options and opportunities available to them at the prison. Women could engage in beading, cooking, singing, song writing, doll making and had the opportunity to participate in basketball, mixed volleyball, group fitness and walking. Section 95 placements were available with Pilbara Home Care and women were encouraged to participate in work and education.
- 3.8 However, the report noted that the range of activities was limited, gowns were not made available to women being strip searched, and that a previously established Women’s Services Committee had fallen down. Positively, various staff members, including the WSO, were reportedly enthusiastic and keen to drive women’s services further. It was also noted that it would not be possible to further expand the women’s precinct within the inner perimeter: ‘whatever may be future planned would have to take into account a completely new facility to replace the existing area’.⁴⁴
- 3.9 The prison’s support for women’s participation in education, training and work bore fruit in August 2011 with the participation of a young woman in the WorkReady program at DECCA. However, on 8 September 2011, during a liaison visit by staff members from this Office, she was returned to the prison by order from a senior manager from head office, who considered her gender posed an unacceptable security risk in that environment. Only strong intervention by this Office with the Commissioner restored the young woman to the program which she completed, proving to be an exceptional trainee.

42 Ibid, 30, Recommendation 13.

43 DCS, *Report on Regional Prisons Women’s Services – Roebourne*, (2011).

44 Ibid.

- 3.10 A setback for the women's precinct was the resignation of the WSO in December 2011 and a failure in subsequent months to replace her, while a business case to make the position full time was under consideration. As a result it was left to the Transition Manager, Education Manager, Re-entry Contractor and Assistant Chaplain, to service the women as best they could. In the last half of 2011 and the first half of 2012, there were persistent concerns by staff and management at the lack of interest shown by women in some of the activities arranged for them and staff responded by locking them out of their cells in the mornings.
- 3.11 In the meantime there were a series of incidents which for custodial management highlighted some of the risks and issues associated with management of men and women in a small facility including two instances of sexual contact during recreation time and one of sexual harassment. In another difficult case, two young parents were in the prison together and were abusive to each other whenever they had contact.
- 3.12 In early 2012, faced with severe overcrowding at Bandyup Women's Prison, DCS embarked on development of a 10-year plan for female offenders. As a first step, in February 2012, a 'desktop audit' was undertaken to assess the suitability of facilities with a current operational capacity for women prisoners. Regional facilities were rated generally as having a much more limited capacity to deliver services or programs than the metropolitan prisons with Roebourne rated in the worst category in facilities for recreation activities, employment, education, programs, mother-baby stays and interview room capacity for its women prisoners.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, the *Female Prisoners Plan 2012–2022* approved by the Commissioner on 30 July 2012 recognised Roebourne as continuing to accommodate 12 women for the foreseeable future.

AN UNEXPECTED CHANGE OF DIRECTION

- 3.13 This Office has been unable to definitively establish when, and by whom, a decision was taken to close the main women's yard at Roebourne leaving only a residual capacity to receive women on remand. We became aware of the decision only after receiving a report from the Independent Visitor who attended RRP on 24 January 2013. The women had already been informed and remaining Kimberley women were quickly transferred to Broome and onto West Kimberley Regional Prison, while others were transferred to the new women's unit at Greenough Regional Prison. Prison management insisted that the decision was taken at head office 'in response to reports on the lack of facilities and structured treatment and lifeskills programs for females at Roebourne'.⁴⁶ It was contended that the needs of the women would be better served at the expanded precinct in Greenough, which had commenced operation on 30 November 2012.

45 DCS, *Female Prisoners Plan 2012–2022*, (2012) 23, Table 7. Oddly, the quality of the accommodation itself was not included in the audit. The methodology and utility of this audit is questionable as it is less than clear whether it is rating the suitability of facilities for certain services, or the availability or quality of such services.

46 DCS, *2013 Inspection of Roebourne Prison, Department of Corrective Services Submission*, (July 2013) 9.

- 3.14 However, the decision coincided with other decisions to close the Millstream Work Camp and to convert the minimum-security yard in Unit 2 to a medium-security yard. It was therefore convenient if the women's yard was available to convert into an enhanced privilege wing for men returning from the work camp. The closure of the women's yard was also convenient in that it enabled the transfer of the WSO's FTE to Greenough, allowing the position there to become full-time.
- 3.15 Prison management and other staff acknowledged a sense of relief from having to maintain a small women's precinct in an overwhelmingly male prison, with the constant struggle to secure and maintain an appropriate level of service to a relatively small number of women, including finding and retaining a WSO.
- 3.16 With the traditional women's yard being closed a small remand section for the women was developed in the wedge-shaped outdoor space between that block and what was the male minimum (now medium) security block, creating a small area with an operational capacity of five beds. In addition, two Multi-purpose cells with a very small caged area adjacent to the unit control area, normally used for male prisoners, were identified for use as an overflow if more than five women had to be accommodated, or if someone presented an adverse security risk.

THE FEW WHO REMAIN

- 3.17 Women received from Court are normally held by RRP in the new remand section for only a week or two, either until they are released or given a longer remand. If remanded for longer than two weeks they will generally be transferred to Greenough. Newly sentenced women may be held in the section for a week or two, to allow for visits from family or friends before their transfer. The section also holds Pilbara women transferred back to RRP prior to their release, and women who have taken the opportunity to be returned to have family visits for a two week period (which they can apply for every six months) or for 'sorry time' after a death of a relative in the community.
- 3.18 In seven months since the women's yard at Roebourne Prison was closed, the remand section has accommodated between zero and five women at any one time. At the start of the Inspection, there was only one newly received young woman who was due to remain for two more weeks before her next court appearance.

DISPLACING THE WOMEN

3.19 The small remand section is now quite strictly segregated from the normal running of the prison with Local Order 15, dated May 2013, making the following provisions for women:⁴⁷

- All movements outside the unit to be under escort;
- All support services (PSO, AVS, Re-entry, Education) to be conducted in the female wing;
- All meals provided and consumed in the unit;
- Phone calls available only at certain times in another wing;
- Recreation entirely in own wing. Library/educational material provided on request;
- Medication provided in the unit; and
- Contact with male prisoners generally only by a structured visit on the weekend.

3.20 As a result women encountered at RRP by OICS inspectors and Independent Visitors in the seven months before the inspection expressed bewilderment, frustration, and anger at the degree of confinement they experienced in their wing, their inability to have normal interaction with male prisoners, the lack of any structured activity, their neglect at times by staff, and lack of ready access to a telephone.



Figure 12: The veranda in the residual women's wing.

⁴⁷ These are shortened and provisions for exceptions have not been included.

- 3.21 People coming into custody tend to look for people they know for support. Because of their numbers, male prisoners have much more opportunity to mix and find close family or friends. If a woman wants to see say a cousin or uncle, she has to apply by submitting a unit request form, and if approved, have a formal visit in the visits centre on the weekend. For fear of embarrassment, a prisoner asking for such a visit would need to be confident it would be wanted.⁴⁸ During the inspection we observed the sole female prisoner being essentially isolated from any contact with other prisoners and with minimal contact with staff. Her only form of communication with other prisoners was by laying on the ground near the side fence within the unit and talking with some of the male prisoners as they walked along the outer corridor. Unquestionably, association between men and women in custody needs to occur in a safe and closely supervised environment but the small numbers in the remand yard make this requirement more, not less acute.
- 3.22 The young woman also said she would like to play basketball or walk around the oval. It is unreasonable that women are neither provided with any fitness equipment in their unit or the opportunity to recreate outside their own wing, particularly given that the lawn in the garden was too small for recreation. It is also unfair that women prisoners were unable to visit the canteen or browse the collection in the library on some kind of regular basis.⁴⁹ Bingo on Sunday afternoons in the dining room was something the women used to look forward to. The failure to allow women to attend religious services is particularly pernicious in this regard. Some kind of balance should also be achieved in delivery of services in unit and allowing women to attend for example an appointment or workshop at education or re-entry. This is likely to be uncommon given that most women stay for only a short time, but should not be ruled out of order.
- 3.23 A particular difficulty with the female wing at the time of the inspection was the lack of its own outlet for the prisoner telephone system (PTS). LO 15 allows three periods a day when women may use a PTS in the adjacent male wing, but only under close supervision to ensure separation from male prisoners. This of course, depends on the availability of staff. The wing officer (the designated officer) for the women has often been rated a lower priority than other areas and had been withdrawn for long periods, making access to the phone much more intermittent.
- 3.24 Like most short term remandees, women at RRP have no opportunity to undertake employment and are almost always paid at Level 5 classified as unemployed or as a miscellaneous worker. They may be asked to clean the ablutions or sweep the veranda, but there is no opportunity to earn extra money. As discussed above, weekly gratuities are insufficient to pay for cigarettes or tobacco, and there is little opportunity to save enough, or receive extra money from family during their short stay, or even to share with others, thereby increasing the stress levels of those addicted to tobacco.

48 LO 15 allows that a remandee may be approved to have weekday visits and there is a provision for a visit to be allowed 'exceptionally' through a grill between the Multi-purpose Cell and the unit. There was no evidence that such 'visits' actually occur.

49 Recreation have in principle set aside three half-hour periods in which women may visit the library and indicated that when offered, women have declined, but women spoken to indicated they had not been made aware of this opportunity, which suggests a deficiency in their orientation.

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- 3.25 The Assistant Chaplain visited the wing each Monday morning and provided some craft for anyone who wanted it. The Transition Manager informed the inspection that Health-in-Prison workshops were also made available to women on a monthly basis if there were women present who hadn't done it before. The young woman encountered during the inspection did not know despite having been there for three days that she was supposed to have access to the air-conditioned demountable building in the yard which we found in any case to be locked. This had a lounge, television, DVD player and Nintendo Wii, but the disks were all scratched and the Wii lacked a controller. There was a table and chairs for craft.
- 3.26 A small table setting was provided under the veranda near the cell door, with two picnic tables and smoking shelter on the lawn surrounded by shrubbery. At the open end of the outdoor space there was a demountable room and an unused raised garden bed. A washing machine was available. Women prisoners also had access to a kitchenette with an urn, sink, toaster and fridge in the mother-baby cell. But the wing lacked any kind of stove or cooking facility, such as microwave, toasting oven or electric frypan. Nor was the sink in the demountable connected. One would not expect a self-care kitchen in a remand yard for women, but an opportunity to cook simple foods would seem a minimum amenity for women in such an environment. Women from other facilities returning for visits or for release would also benefit from an amenity of that sort.
- 3.27 Staff had various views about the wisdom of women being sent away from their region, some deeply aggrieved at their displacement, others thought it was easier without them or that they would be better cared for somewhere else. A good many, however, voiced their concern for the welfare of the women left behind, appreciating that their isolation and the lack of a structured day was both unfair and unacceptable. During the inspection, it was noted that individual staff attempted to relieve the situation by providing the female prisoner with some magazines to read or spending some time talking with her. But there were long periods when the young woman was simply left alone, with the wing under observation from the unit control.

Recommendation 10

Improve facilities, activities and services for women held at Roebourne Regional Prison, and provide supervised opportunities to associate with male family and friends.

EXILE FROM COUNTRY

- 3.28 In 2008, this Office published its Inspection Standards for Aboriginal Prisoners 'to reflect the prison experience of Aboriginal prisoners' and 'to identify what all prisons, but particularly those prisons where Aboriginal prisoners predominate in the prison population should be setting out to achieve and by what standards they should be operating.'⁵⁰

50 OICS, *Inspection Standards for Aboriginal Prisoners*, (2008) 1–3.

3.29 The first of these standards is that ‘Aboriginal prisoners should be able to serve out their sentence within their own country’.⁵¹ It noted that without sufficient facilities in each region to accommodate prisoners of all genders, security ratings and program needs, large numbers are dislocated to facilities in other regions, away from their families and home country. It explains that most Aboriginal people have a strong sense of belong to land or country in a way that is bound up with their own sense of who they are:

Ultimately, relocating Aboriginal prisoners outside their ‘country’ imposes emotional and spiritual distress beyond that imposed upon non-Aboriginal prisoners. This practice arguably constitutes ‘cruel inhuman and degrading punishment’, in terms of the applicable Human Rights Conventions to which Australia is party.⁵²

3.30 A data analysis before the 2013 Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison found that there were 14 Aboriginal women from the Pilbara incarcerated throughout Western Australia.⁵³ Of these, only four were (temporarily) accommodated at Roebourne Regional Prison, while seven were at the new Greenough Women’s Unit and one each at West Kimberley, Bandyup and Boronia.



Figure 13: Two of the five beds available for women.

51 Ibid, 4, Standard A1.

52 Ibid, 4. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

53 Analysis of data downloaded from TOMS on 15 August 2013. This data is based on address information provided by the prisoner on admission and should be treated as indicative, not definitive.

- 3.31 For women prisoners the sense of separation and dislocation is arguably exacerbated by their having to surrender their mother/carer role, however much that has already been compromised by their incarceration. This was certainly expressed to both Independent Visitors and staff from this Office on many occasions this year.
- 3.32 Prison management noted that a good many women at RRP had infrequent visits or none at all, especially those from other parts of the vast Pilbara region and argued that women had better chance of staying in touch with their families through use of the videolink facilities at either Greenough or Bandyup. However, this is not the case, and despite their initial installation in prisons for remote family visit purposes, such facilities are overwhelmingly used for court video links, rarely for virtual social visits.⁵⁴
- 3.33 Many of these incarcerated mothers are trying to maintain control or a level of involvement in alternative arrangements for their dependants with extended family or officers from the Department of Child Protection, with displacement adding to another layer of complication and despair.
- 3.34 The Department's *Female Prisoners Plan 2012–2022* includes a good summary of key issues for women in custody, including their ongoing parenting role, the over-representation of Aboriginal women prisoners and concerns about their displacement from country. However, remarkably, the Department excused itself from 'being influenced' by data on displacement, claiming that address information cannot be verified and that women in a regional facility were still in many cases a long way from their own country in another part of the region.⁵⁵

Recommendation 11

A properly resourced women's precinct should be re-established at Roebourne Regional Prison. This should include a full-time Women's Support Officer and a restoration of traditional freedoms of association, movement and participation in recreation, education and training.

54 In 12 months to 30 September 2013, only ten payments were recorded for a video visit at RRP. On video visits at Greenough, see OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Greenough Regional Prison*, Report No. 83 (March 2013) 52, [4.29].

55 DCS, *Female Prisoners Plan 2012–2022* (2012) 15–16.

Chapter 4

STAYING HEALTHY

HEALTHCARE STAFFING

4.1 The health service is fully staffed with a Clinical Nurse Manager and another 3.5 FTE nursing positions. The team working and morale of staff in healthcare appeared to be good. Staff appeared to be genuinely caring in their approach. There is little slack in the number of staff available so sickness can result in a reduction of service provided. That there is a nursing presence every day for 10 hours with so few FTE is impressive. However the team lacks a co-morbidity nurse to manage the high level of substance misuse or mental health in the prison. In addition to permanent RRP healthcare centre staff, a number of medical and other visiting staff provide services on a sessional basis:

- An average of two sessions, or five hours of general practice are provided per week.
- One video link psychiatry session every six weeks remotely from Perth (none in person).
- Two days by a DCS mental health nurse every 6 weeks (visiting from Perth).
- Podiatry one day per month.
- Diabetes educator one day per month.
- Audiology screening weekly (audit being conducted).

4.2 Composition of the health team at RRP is not ideal, in that there is still no Aboriginal health worker nor any male staff (culturally some prisoners have difficulty talking about intimate health issues with females).⁵⁶

4.3 Support from prison administration is thought to be good, but healthcare staff feel a lack of responsiveness from DCS Health Services management in Perth to the point where they avoid making requests. It is acknowledged that day to day issues are not always easy to manage remotely.

HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

4.4 The healthcare centre is small and its layout prevents staff from having dedicated work spaces, so all share. There are insufficient consultation areas to ensure that healthcare centre work can take place when required. Occasionally staff have been sent home because there is no room for them to work, which is less than satisfactory. RRP management sought to have an additional two consultation rooms constructed in the 2013 priority improvements funding round from strategic assets but was unsuccessful.

4.5 Remarkably, two of the four rooms used also lacked sinks for hand washing between patients. The rooms themselves were also dirty, compromising hygiene. Cleaning of the centre is undertaken by prisoners without any specialist training, essential for cleaning a medical facility. Prisoner cleaning should be complemented by professional cleaning on a regular basis. A duty officer provides security but consultation rooms lack escape doors. The waiting area for the healthcare centre is a small caged area outside the end door containing a small bench, which is less than decent. There was also little about the design or décor of the centre to provide a sense of cultural safety to its mainly Aboriginal patients

56 Highlighted in OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 41, [6.6].

Recommendation 12

Expand the health centre and create a decent waiting area for prisoners.



Figure 14: The waiting area adjacent to the Health Centre.

- 4.6 Staff reported that ECHO, the online electronic medical record system was much improved, although RRP continued to suffer from serious problems with download speed, which has an impact on efficiency. Some staff had not received adequate training in its use and were unable to access some of its functionality.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

- 4.7 A reasonable system is in place to request access to nursing care, by placing a health card in a box in the unit which is cleared by health centre staff on daily basis. However, there were complaints that some were not seen for up to two days. If an appointment with a doctor is needed, after seeing the nurse, the prisoner is waitlisted. A physician from DCS Health Services in Perth attends for two days every three weeks, and a local Registrar attends for one day every two weeks. Thus it can take weeks to be seen given the nature of the rota that has some weeks when there is no GP service and a number of prior or higher priority appointments.

- 4.8 At the time of the last inspection in mid-2010, before the closure of a medical clinic in Wickham, the prison received 15 hours of general practice per fortnight. Following the inspection twelve and a half hours per fortnight were being provided, including from a GP from the Mawarnkarra Health Service.⁵⁷ However, this could not be sustained and at the time of the current inspection only an average of 10 hours a fortnight was available. This is a significant reduction of service and clearly insufficient. It will certainly need to be upgraded as the Town Work Camp is occupied and prisoner numbers increase.

Recommendation 13

Increase the provision of general practice at the Roebourne Regional Prison Health Centre.

- 4.9 A particular difficulty with the existing appointment system is that many with mental illnesses are not identified and do not present themselves to services for treatment. Those who do not attend healthcare may be those who are most in need of treatment. For example, in many cases schizophrenia leads to an erosion in motivation (especially to seek treatment), or patients with this disorder may have active reasons to avoid mental health services. To this degree the appointment system is not necessarily needs-led, despite its attractions as being a demand-led system. More assertive processes are required to ensure the patients who need the healthcare service can access it.
- 4.10 The 2013 Prisoner Survey indicated that overall levels of satisfaction with the healthcare service was quite high, and had improved since 2010. They were less satisfied with mental health and dental services, and with the help available for addictions.

SCREENING

- 4.11 Screening of newly received prisoners is problematic, with prisoners often arriving late in the working day. Screening has to be undertaken rapidly, yet desirably has to capture all forms of health pathology. Unfortunately there are few questions relating to health at the initial screening, and it would appear easy for prisoners to deny the presence of a mental disorder, in order to avoid the prescription of unwanted medication or associated stigma and discrimination.
- 4.12 All patients are also supposed to be seen by a nurse within 48 hours of arrival when a basic medical history and physical examination are undertaken. Staff dislike the standard health screen (AMR1012) and it appears do not regularly use it. All patients are then supposed to be assessed by a GP within 28 days of arrival, and when they are this assessment is also unstructured. Those patients who are initially assessed by the nurse or the GP as having a possible mental disorder can be referred to the mental health nurse who attends once every six weeks, or to the psychiatrist who undertakes one videolink session every six weeks.

57 Ibid, [6.7].

- 4.13 As there is no standardised mental health screening using a recognised and validated screening tool it is likely that many cases of mental illness are not detected at screening. It has long been known that even standardised screening at prison reception often fails to detect mental disorder. Failure to identify mental disorder in prisons means that a valuable opportunity for treatment is lost. Many of these individuals may never otherwise come to the attention of mental health services, many coming from remote communities where such services are scarce.
- 4.14 There is no formal or standardised assessment of substance misuse undertaken.

Recommendation 14

Review the health and mental health screening processes at Roebourne Regional Prison, and if necessary across the State.

CENTRE PRACTICE

- 4.15 A variety of health programs at RRP have identified nurses nominated as having key responsibility for the program. These include chronic disease management and Blood Borne Virus/Sexually Transmitted Infection management. The nurse with responsibility for a program is expected to coordinate and inform other staff of current management and processes as per departmental policy and to ensure standardisation of care delivery. However, at RRP portfolios are not prioritised and work in these areas is mixed in with all other duties.
- 4.16 Case management is the ideal standard for community care, and in those prisoners with chronic or mental health problems, these are required to ensure needs are met. However, prisoners at RRP are only rarely managed with multi-disciplinary care plans and ongoing treatment packages.
- 4.17 There was little preventative medicine practiced at the prison, for example screening clinics, programs or check-ups for specific conditions. However, an audiologist from the Pilbara Health Network was undertaking a pilot audit of hearing loss of prisoners at RRP. Of the first 41 prisoners tested, 31, or 75 per cent were found to have some degree of hearing loss. Six required hearing aids.⁵⁸ A 2011 study of hearing loss impairment among indigenous prisoners in the Northern Territory found that potential benefits in treatment of the condition include ‘improved inmate management practices and enhanced wellbeing among inmates, as well as better rehabilitation outcomes and lower levels of recidivism.’⁵⁹

58 Leidwinger, L, *Interim Report on the Roebourne Regional Prison Hearing Health Program* (1 October 2013), Pilbara Health Network.

59 Vanderpoll, T & Howard, D, *Investigation into hearing impairment among Indigenous prisoners within the Northern Territory Correctional Services* (2011) Northern Territory Correctional Services.

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- 4.18 In general there are poor levels of basic health awareness among prisoners despite some very brief harm minimisation/drug awareness programs such as HIP-HOP and workshops arranged by the re-entry provider. There is no group health education offered in diet, weight, nutrition, effect of drugs and alcohol, benefits of hygiene, reproduction/contraception. Such programmes have the potential to reduce the degree of pathology in the population and enhance wellbeing. Nor are there any programs to encourage or assist prisoners to quit smoking, despite its extremely high prevalence at Roebourne and its deleterious effects on health. Nicotine replacements are no longer provided through the health centre, but are available to buy in the canteen. These cost \$13.50 for a week's supply of 21mg starter packs, a not inconsiderable amount. Only 13 of these had been sold in the year to 30 September 2013, with another eight at lower doses and which cost a little less.
- 4.19 When a patient is released, a medical information summary is faxed with consent to local services to ensure appropriate follow up. However, it is very difficult to keep track of patients after release, as they often leave the area. It would be helpful if discharge summary could be posted on the WA Health electronic medical record (eg MMEX), to be accessed by medical services whenever and wherever required.
- 4.20 Mawarnkarra is funded to provide a health re-entry service to Aboriginal prisoners at RRP. This is to help ensure that ex-prisoners are connected with the services they need. However, there was a six-month interruption in service provision in the first half of 2013 when the first re-entry worker left after only a few months and it is too early since it recommenced to gauge how successful the program has been.
- 4.21 Regrettably, there is still no Aboriginal Health Care Strategy that guides the delivery of healthcare at RRP, despite recommendation 15 of the last inspection report.⁶⁰ Nor are there any Aboriginal health staff in the centre or any evidence of closer integration with local providers of Aboriginal healthcare. On a positive note, the Nurse Manager had long experience in remote area practice (with others having various levels of experience). Cultural Safety Training was delivered to RRP health staff in June 2011 by the Aboriginal Health Council of WA, although there has been some turnover so further cultural training will be needed. This should preferably be provided by trainers with Pilbara-specific cultural knowledge.

Recommendation 15

Develop a health care strategy for Roebourne Regional Prison to guide the development of health care services, inclusive of a particular focus on Aboriginal health, women's health, screening practices, care practices, team portfolios, in-reach services, mental health care, health promotion and throughcare practices.

60 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 46, [6.28] and Recommendation 15.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 4.22 There is limited clinical supervision for nursing or medical staff, and there are too few continuous professional development or medical education opportunities available locally. The situation might be improved if staff had access to the regular educational opportunities which take place in Perth if video link technology was used. This would also assist in the reduction of professional isolation. It was observed that some staff were not using the full functionality in ECHO, the online electronic medical record system, which ultimately presents a risk to the agency and to quality patient care, and required further training.
- 4.23 In the pre-inspection survey, RRP staff felt they had received inadequate training in: interpersonal skills (60 per cent), management of prisoners with mental health issues (72 per cent) and management of prisoners with drug issues (66 per cent). This is a significant drop from the last inspection and rather worse than with the average of staff from other prisons in WA over the last three years.
- 4.24 As discussed above (at 4.13) it is likely that many cases of mental illness among the prison population are failing to be detected by staff. This is a waste of a valuable opportunity to intervene in stabilising prisoners conditions before they return to the community and would indicate that staff would benefit from Mental Health First Aid training.

Recommendation 16

Provide mental health care training for nursing staff at Roebourne Regional Prison Health Centre, and mental health first aid training to custodial staff and others working with prisoners.

DENTISTRY

- 4.25 Oral hygiene amongst prisoners is poor and the level of tooth decay and dental ill health was substantial. The prison does not have the facilities to provide dental services, and so all appointments are undertaken under escort. Only three or so appointments are able to be booked once a fortnight in South Hedland, a two hour drive away. As discussed above, Serco then have to transport prisoners to their dental appointments, and hold them in a small cell in the van while others are treated (see 2.3 above).
- 4.26 Only after all dental appointments are complete and any court matters involving prisoners are complete, does the van return to RRP, often after 4:00 pm. If local analgesia has been given during the treatment, by the time the van returns analgesia has worn off. Prisoners say they sometimes miss out on lunch. It is not surprising then, that many prisoners decline to attend such an appointment. One even chose to extract his own tooth. It is sometimes possible to get prisoners seen at Mawarnkarra Health Service in Roebourne or at a clinic in Karratha, but only if a vacancy arises, and if Serco are able to provide an escort service.
- 4.27 A Pilbara-based dentist has expressed willingness to provide sessions at the prison should a dental chair and other basic equipment be provided. This should be a priority.

Recommendation 17

Establish a dental facility at Roebourne Regional Prison Health Centre.

MEDICATION

- 4.28 Medicine is dispensed from a window from the Health Centre into the quadrangle. The time of evening dispensing at 5:30 pm is much better than 4:00 pm, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. Even so, some medications are not dispensed according to manufacturers' recommendations or relevant prescribing guidelines. This may interfere with the pharmaco-dynamics of the drug and could compromise the effectiveness of the treatment, produce disturbances in patient's sleep-wake cycle and may compromise patient safety.
- 4.29 Medications for prisoners are prepared in blister packs by a centralised pharmacy, once a prescription is received. These packs contain all the medication for that individual, with separate blisters for different times of the day containing the necessary medication for that period. This process has been adopted because it is deemed to be efficient and cost effective. Orders for Webster Packs for RRP are made on Thursday mornings and arrive on Fridays. However, if the GP sees a patient on a Thursday afternoon, the order can't be made until the follow Thursday morning, and prescribed medication takes eight days to arrive. In the meantime, the healthcare centre can acquire the medication from stock or from the local pharmacy.
- 4.30 The use of a centralised pharmacy situated many thousands of kilometres away creates difficulty in being insufficiently flexible. The existing system cannot accommodate titration or changes of dose quickly, and can create delays for patients receiving an initial prescription, changes in dose, or after reception into the prison. These issues are relevant to the treatment of mental illness, which often requires rapid changes of medication regime in response to tolerance, side effects, changes in symptomatology and efficacy. The use of Webster packs also precludes the use of liquid formulations.
- 4.31 The delay in dispensing medication after reception can cause significant risk to the patient, as withdrawal from some medication for example some anti-depressants can lead to withdrawal syndromes and elevation of risk. The prison has responded to some of these difficulties by entering into a relationship with a local pharmacy, who can supply when medication that is prescribed is not stocked.
- 4.32 Webster packs do confer some advantage by allowing some low security prisoners access to self-administer medication: the packs are kept in cells and patients help themselves as prescribed or as required. Compliance is difficult to check, but the range of medication used in this way is restricted to those medications which are not thought to be subject to abuse or likely to induce non-compliance. Each prisoner enters into a contract with healthcare and the procedures and rules regarding self-administration are explained.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

- 4.33 There were eight prisoners identified as suffering from a major mental disorder at the time of the inspection, a rate of 5.7 per cent. This rate represents only those who have been positively identified at admission and, as noted earlier, it is possible that some with serious mental disorders are not coming to the attention of healthcare staff. The rate of substance misuse in the prison is high – most prisoners have serious substance misuse problems – predominantly alcohol.
- 4.34 The Local Mental Health Service does not provide any sessions to the prison and indeed there is only one psychiatrist for the whole of the Pilbara. Psychiatric input (one session every six weeks) comes from a consultant via videolink. Some indigenous clients find it difficult to engage via videolink, and if the consultant was able to augment his sessions by a quarterly attendance, in all likelihood trust and engagement would be enhanced.
- 4.35 In addition to psychiatric sessions, mental health nursing sessions are also offered, for two days every six weeks on a visiting basis by the mental health nurse based at Banksia Hill Detention Centre. For the degree of severe psychopathology identified in the prison, the present level of resourcing appears to suffice, but is unlikely to be sufficient if all cases had been appropriately identified. Additionally, other more common mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder, were not being brought to the attention of specialist staff.
- 4.36 These disorders can cause considerable ill health, and can be exacerbated by the following factors in prisons including: overcrowding, poor environmental conditions, poor food quality, inadequate health care, aggression (physical, verbal, racial or sexual), lack of purposeful activity, the availability of illicit drugs, enforced solitude, distance from family, and lack of privacy. Some of these cases are seen and managed in primary care by the general practitioners but may benefit from more specialist attention.
- 4.37 When patients require transfer to hospital for psychiatric treatment, they are admitted to the Frankland Centre in Perth. This is the state's only maximum secure psychiatric facility and contains just 30 beds. There are no dedicated female beds or a female ward: any referred females are accommodated along with males requiring conditions of security. Referrals for psychiatric assessment are made under the *Mental Health Act 1996* via a Form 1, which is valid for a week. If transfer cannot be made within that period due to a lack of available beds, the Form 1 lapses and the prisoner has to be seen again in the prison and another Form 1 completed. Usually patients are transferred to prison in Perth whilst awaiting a bed, to enable rapid transfer once one becomes available. Access to the Frankland Centre has become more difficult due to rising pressure on the 30 beds as the WA prison population has increased, and waiting times have increased. In addition it is far from ideal that mentally ill people requiring hospital admission from RRP have to travel such a long distance in order to receive hospital care.

- 4.38 Drug and alcohol problems are endemic in prison. The healthcare centre manages prisoners with drug and alcohol problems. Some are identified as requiring detoxification on admission, but many prisoners prefer to go into withdrawal. This may not always be safe. There is no co-morbidity nurse available with specific training in addictions services nor any in-reach services from outside agencies. This is unsatisfactory.
- 4.39 In 2010 RRP did have a part-time Co-morbidity nursing position which provided an effective service to 16 prisoner-patients, who were variously categorised as having mental health, depression, or co-morbidity issues; in addition to providing a rolling, 10-week ‘Stages of Change’ program once per week for 10 prisoners with addictions issues at any one time.⁶¹ However, after the incumbent left, Health Services found it impossible to fill this part-time position and it was decided to transfer the item to another facility where it could be better utilised.
- 4.40 The Prison Counselling Service is presently provided by a single counsellor who also has responsibility for treatment assessment, and three times per year, co-facilitating the Cognitive Brief Intervention program. Individual assessment and counselling is only provided to identify and manage prisoners at risk of self-harm as part of the ARMS process. It has no role in assessing and treating prisoners with mental health or other psychological issues. Nor does it provide individual psychotherapy for prisoners in relation to their offending issues.

Recommendation 18

Explore engagement of an external provider to allow in-reach drug and alcohol services prior to release, and to permit seamless re-entry services to those with substance misuse disorders transitioning into the community.

61 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 46, [6.30]–[6.34].

Chapter 5

LOOKING OUT

GETTING SORTED (ASSESSMENT AND CASE MANAGEMENT)

- 5.1 As required by the Department's system of assessment and case management, a Management and Placement Plan (MAP) is done on all Remandees and short-term sentenced prisoners admitted to Roebourne Regional Prison (RRP), and an Individual Management Plan (IMP) prepared for sentenced prisoners likely to stay over six months. Prisoners with an IMP are case managed by an allocated prisoner officer, who is required to discuss the prisoner's progress against their IMP every six months and complete a Contact Report. Various other assessments, applications and reports may be needed during a prisoner's stay, including for participation in external activities, and any Parole Report.
- 5.2 The Case Management Coordinator (CMC) position is primarily responsible for the case management system. This system requires completion of contact reports by allocated case managers (unit staff) from short interviews with prisoners on a regular basis, usually every three months. A scan of these contact reports showed they were completed conscientiously by most officers, with some showing an admirable interest in the prisoner's issues and rehabilitation needs. This Office has in the past been quite critical of the case management system as it presently exists and it was encouraging to hear from the CMC at Roebourne that a reformed system is due to be implemented in November 2013. However, it was concerning to hear there may be inadequate training and other resources for the implementation.
- 5.3 The CMC has also assumed responsibility for assessments, in the absence of the Manager Assessments or Senior Officer Assessments position found in most other receiving prisons. The position tasked with preparing assessment reports is the Report Writer, whose line manager is the Assistant Superintendent Operations (ASO), but is supervised by the CMC day-to-day. We found in our 2010 inspection that the Report Writer position was filled by a prison officer on a three-month rotating secondment, which was concerning given the complexity of skills and knowledge required. RRP subsequently decided to put out an Expression Of Interest to create a pool of staff trained in report writing by rotating into the position for a six-month period.
- 5.4 This has been only partially successful because the Report Writer has too often had to cover for the Movements Officer, as well as undertaking other custodial duties in areas when the prison is short staffed. In reality, with the Report Writer unavailable, the CMC has become a full-time report writer on top of her other responsibilities.
- 5.5 Data from the online ACM system indicated that only four Individual Management Plans for the six-month period prior to the inspection were completed more than 14 days after the scheduled date (which, for new admissions, is four weeks after a sentence is imposed). This suggests good performance in this area – there are often reasons outside the report writer's control for delays such as outstanding charges or unavailability of treatment assessment. Given the staffing difficulties outlined above, it is clear this level of performance was only possible due to the unsustainable efforts of the individuals concerned. Unsustainable because it appears to have been at the cost of a reduction in some other important areas such as the provision of training for staff in case management and assessment.

- 5.6 The 2010 inspection report expressed concerns about a lack of staff resources in this critical area of prisoner management and noted that RRP had sought a second Report Writer position under a staffing review that was to be undertaken. Prison management informed this office that the volume of work at Roebourne was found in the review not to warrant a second report writer position and it was implied that a less thorough job on the part of the existing staff would be acceptable. This of course, is less than acceptable, and with the prison population likely to rise by 30 when the Town Work Camp is occupied in 2014, the assessment and case management system at RRP will likely reach breaking point without further resources. In the meantime, the existing Report Writer position should be quarantined from routine cross-deployment to other duties except when prison staffing is critical.

Recommendation 19

Dedicate additional resources for prisoner assessment and report writing.

LEARNING NEW WAYS (OFFENDER PROGRAMS)

- 5.7 Offender Programs are a particular set of accredited rehabilitative programs for prisoners to address offending issues identified through the assessment process. Given a proper match of offender risks and needs with the design of the particular program, successful completion of such a program is considered to reduce the individual's risk of recidivism. Four checklists for these programs are administered to prisoners with sentences that require at least a 12-month custodial stay: the Cognitive Skills, Violence, Substance Use and (if indicated by their offences) Sex Offending, checklists as part of developing their Individual Management Plan.
- 5.8 The treatment assessor attempts to assign individuals to a program they may require in any of these domains scheduled either locally or at another facility. This depends on their assessed level of risk (programs are generally funded only for those requiring a medium or high level of intervention), their background (Indigenous prisoners may need a culturally appropriate program), the willingness of the person to undertake such a program, and the time available before their potential release date.
- 5.9 The 2010 inspection found that: 'notwithstanding these staffing concerns, there is much to commend about the quality and stability of program delivery at Roebourne compared to that encountered in earlier inspections'.⁶² Of the 3.5 positions for programs and counselling at Roebourne, three were filled although of these one, the Aboriginal Programs Facilitator, was away and her future was uncertain. That person did not return and neither that position nor the 0.5 vacancy were subsequently filled. In addition, at the time of the 2013 inspection the Senior Programs Officer had recently gone on maternity leave without a replacement, leaving just one Prison Counsellor/Senior Programs Officer at RRP.

62 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 50, [7.8].

LOOKING OUT

- 5.10 In 2010, RRP had a reasonably full range of programs with three or four Building on Aboriginal Skills (a brief cognitive skills course), two Women's Substance Use, three or four Indigenous Men Managing Anger and Substance Use, and two Indigenous Family Violence programs scheduled each year.⁶³ In 2013, the only programs operating or planned at RRP were three Cognitive Brief Intervention (CBI) programs. The CBI is indeed brief with just 20 program delivery hours and is facilitated by an officer from Perth who travels to RRP for a few days to co-facilitate the program with the Prison Counsellor/Senior Programs Officer. The important contribution by custodial staff in facilitating more substantive cognitive skills programs in earlier years has long been discontinued at Roebourne. Previous involvement by external agencies in helping facilitate certain programs was unable to continue at a certain point, and opportunities to re-engage or take on new providers have not been taken up.
- 5.11 None of this would be a concern if offender programs were not actually needed at Roebourne. The following two tables compare the situation for prisoners resident at RRP in the month before the most recent inspection, and in the month following the previous inspection three years before. The "Total" number indicates those assessed as requiring the program, while the sum of those who have actually completed the program ("Done") and those actually booked for a program due to finish prior to their earliest date of release ("Booked") represents those with needs likely to be successfully addressed through scheduled programs ("Success").
- 5.12 As one can see, as at 15 August 2013 when the prison had an unusually low population of 140 prisoners, there were 90 assessed program requirements of which only 30 were likely to have a successful outcome. By comparison, on 5 October 2010, there were 98 program requirements of which 49 were likely to have a successful outcome.

Table 10: Assessed needs and program bookings as at 15 August 2013⁶⁴

Offending Issue	Risk Level	Done	Booked		Un-available	Refused	Other Issue	Total	Success	Per cent (%)
			OK	too late						
Cog skills	Medium	4	1		3	2	1	11	5	45.45
Substance Use	High	9	2	3	13	6	0	33	11	33.33
Substance Use	Medium	2	1	0	4	0	0	7	3	42.86
Violence	High	1	1	1	5	0	0	8	2	25.00
Violence	Medium	-	-	-	1	1	1	3	0	0.00
Violence	Domestic	3	4	-	12	3	-	22	7	31.82
Sex Offending	Medium	1	1	-	-	4	-	6	2	33.33
All Issues	All levels	20	10	4	38	16	2	90	30	33.33

63 Ibid.

64 From data downloaded from the TOMS/ACM system on 15 August 2013. This data does not include prisoners received at Roebourne but subsequently sent to other prisons, including some who may be undertaking programs at that facility.

LOOKING OUT

Table 11: Assessed needs and program bookings as at 5 October 2010⁶⁵

Offending Issue	Risk Level	Done	Booked		Un-available	Refused	With-drew	Total	Success	Per cent (%)
			OK	too late						
Cog skills	Medium	2	4	0	14	6	0	26	6	23.1
Substance Use	Medium	24	2	1	5	0	2	34	26	76.5
Substance Use	High	1	1	0	1	0	0	3	2	66.7
Violence	Low	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	0.0
Violence	Medium	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0.0
Violence	Domestic	12	1	5	7	2	0	27	13	48.1
Sex Offending	Medium	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	2	66.7
Sex Offending	High	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0.0
All Issues	All levels	41	8	7	29	11	2	98	49	50.0

- 5.13 The 50 per cent success rate in 2010 prompted a commentary that only half of Roebourne’s medium and long-term sentenced prisoners could expect to have their assessed program needs met prior to their earliest date of release with others expecting a negative reflection about their completion of programs in their parole report. It was also noted that while a number did complete one or more programs as required, there was often another program requirement which could not be addressed before they applied for parole. It was noted that the situation was ‘system-wide’ and it was not suggested that the situation was better or worse at Roebourne than elsewhere.⁶⁶
- 5.14 However, the situation has markedly deteriorated since 2010, with only 33.3 per cent of program requirements assessed for prisoners at Roebourne likely to have a successful program outcome. Some of those at Roebourne recorded as having completed their programs did so when more were being delivered locally. Without further programs being provided to RRP, it is hard to see how the situation can be improved.
- 5.15 As shown in the following table, RRP shares with other regional ‘Aboriginal’ facilities, and Hakea, the distinction of a sub-40 per cent level of success in terms of the proportion of program requirements likely to be met before a prisoner’s earliest potential release date. Hakea’s status as a predominantly remand prison may explain its figures, however, there appears to be a significant and systemic deficiency in program provision for the mainly Aboriginal populations in remote regional facilities.

⁶⁵ This diagram is slightly modified from that which originally appeared in OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 52. Two cases listed as ‘Identified’ have been folded into the ‘Unavailable’ column.

⁶⁶ OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 52, [5.11].

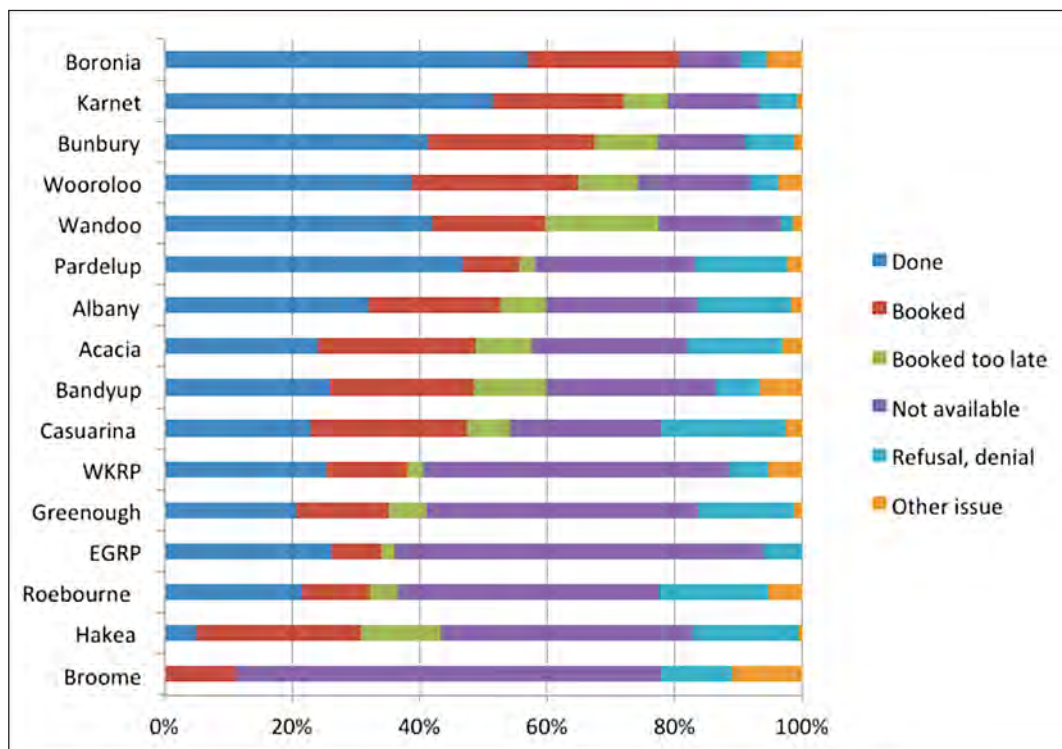


Figure 15: Program requirement status by facility in percentage order of successful outcomes.⁶⁷

MAKING AN EFFORT (EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING)

5.16 Prisoner employment, education and training potentially provides a number of benefits including:

- Enabling participation in activities that helps make prison life more purposeful and hence a diversion from idleness that helps preserve good order in the prison;
- Providing a basis for distributing gratuities in a way that rewards effort and helps maintain good order in the prison;
- Fulfilling societal expectations that people help meet their own domestic needs;
- Reducing the cost of imprisonment through provision of labour for prison cleaning services, maintenance, minor works and ancillary services;
- Reducing the cost of imprisonment through provision of labour for service or production of items for sale;
- Allowing prisoners to give something back to the community by way of reparation, for example, through manufacture of donated goods, or the provision of labour to community projects;
- Building and maintaining basic employability skills such as punctual attendance, working continuously, following instructions, and being respectful; and
- Providing work experience, and developing specific work skills and accredited training that may enhance one's employment prospects.

⁶⁷ Also based on data downloaded from TOMS on 15 August 2013.

LOOKING OUT

- 5.17 The following table indicates the numbers of prisoners at Roebourne assigned to each work area by gratuity level. The information was downloaded from the TOMS database on 18 September 2013. The totals from 2010 are provided as a comparison. An obvious difference between 2010 and 2013 is the much smaller number of prisoners being paid gratuities at levels 1, 2 or 3. This partly reflects a tightening of gratuity allocations across the system but in Roebourne's case was also due to closure of the Millstream Work Camp which had seven prisoners on Level 1 in 2010 and DECCA, which had 16.

Table 12: Employment areas by gratuity levels as at 18 Sept 2013 in comparison with 2010

Work Area	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	2010
Industry Workers	6	3	1	0	0	0	10	10
Kitchen	2	3	10	0	0	0	15	15
Laundry	1	1	6	0	0	0	8	10
Gardens	2	2	4	0	0	0	8	10
Project/Paint Workers	3	2	1	0	0	0	6	2
Rubbish Gang	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Unit Workers	0	0	12	16	0	0	28	32
Special Helpers and Cleaners	6	2	7	0	0	0	15	8
Peer Support	1	4	1	1	0	0	7	3
Education/Training	2	1	2	0	0	0	5	7
External (S.95)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
External (Decca)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
External (Work Camp)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
No Job/Miscellaneous	0	0	0	0	65	2	67	31
Total	23	18	44	17	65	2	169	168
Percentage (%)	13.6	10.7	26	10.1	38.5	1.2	100.0	
2010 Total	48	28	58	10	24	0	168	

- 5.18 Another obvious difference between 2010 and 2013 is the increased number of prisoners receiving a Level 5 gratuity level, or in two cases, Level 6. Level 6 gratuities are reserved for prisoners actually refusing to work or undergoing a period of close supervision. Those deemed willing to work but not yet given an assignment are paid at Level 5. Similar to most other prisons miscellaneous workers are also paid at Level 5. Such workers are required to work as and when directed by staff, for example running errands.
- 5.19 It was most concerning to discover that 65 of 169 prisoners, or 38.5 per cent were on Level 5. Such people are paid just \$20.58 per week which is slightly less than the cheapest packet of cigarettes from the canteen. Thus the prisoner employment and gratuity system at Roebourne is at risk of failing to reap the most basic outcome of a system of prisoner employment, the preservation of good order by providing a diversion from idleness.

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- 5.20 The table above indicates that other prisoners have work assignments for which they receive higher gratuity levels, and in many cases this is well deserved. Kitchen workers, for example, work long hours seven days per week. Some of those in the special workers category also work hard helping or cleaning in trusted roles in the gatehouse, visits, prison administration, the canteen, the store, health centre and reception. However, while industry (including carpentry and maintenance), gardens, project workers, painters sometimes work very hard, in reality their recent, actual level of work participation has at times been very low. This has been due to a range of factors which have impacted on the availability of staff including: sickness; the death of one VSO; and the prolonged failure to fill vacant positions due to budget constraints, staff freezes and staff housing availability.
- 5.21 The use of VSOs as Duty Officers or other non-supervisory roles to release custodial staff at times of short staffing has also taken a major toll on the actual participation of prisoners in work, particularly in horticulture which was already significantly affected by an unreliable water resource. During the inspection just two prisoners, out of six paid as project workers were used as painters, with the cost of paint cited as one factor why more wasn't being done.
- 5.22 The report of the 2010 inspection expressed concern that while minimum-security prisoners received excellent work and training opportunities at DECCA and Millstream Work Camp, the majority medium-security prisoners were largely missing out. The cramped and inadequate workshops and the lack of expansion options were cited as reasons why more extensive vocational skills training could not be provided and it was recommended that the store be relocated to facilitate expansion of workshop and training facilities. It is encouraging that the store is indeed being relocated outside the prison gate as part of the Town Work Camp development, but of course new resources will now have to be found to develop the necessary workshops and training facilities inside the prison.
- 5.23 It should also be noted that an effort was made to provide some short skills training courses within the prison earlier in 2013, an initiative of the former DECCA VSO. This was an excellent initiative, and a reminder that much can be done even with the limited facilities that exist, but one that was unfortunately interrupted by health issues on the part of the VSO.
- 5.24 It was reported following the 2010 inspection that external work by and large was a strength at Roebourne.⁶⁸ As we shall see in the following two sections, at the time of the present inspection, this was no longer the case. Indeed, looking back at the summary of potential benefits of prisoner employment at the start of this section, it is hard to see a single one being satisfactorily realised at RRP at the present time. The extent of this decline has significantly elevated risks both in terms of prisoner recidivism and security and safety within the prison.

Recommendation 20

A strategy for increased prisoner engagement in employment, education, training and community work should be developed.

68 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011).

GIVING BACK (MILLSTREAM AND SECTION 95)

- 5.25 Millstream Work Camp was the first of WA's modern prison work camps, and one of the most productive. Based adjacent to the park's administration base at Millstream-Chichester Ranges National Park it made a major contribution to the amenity and conservation values of the national park. After the last inspection, its capacity increased slightly to 12, although it generally had only 9 resident prisoners. While the construction costs and first three years of operational costs for the Town Work Camp at Roebourne Prison were to be covered by Royalties for Regions funding, the Department was concerned about having to absorb its operational costs in the long term. It was therefore realised that the four positions dedicated to Millstream would have to be transferred to the Town Work Camp if the new project was to be sustainable.
- 5.26 In mid-2012, the Department determined that the Millstream Work Camp would close at the time the Town Work Camp opened, then anticipated by April 2013. This was announced to the local community in early November 2012. However, in February 2013, with the opening of the Town Work Camp delayed for at least another six months, the Department's Head Office decided to close Millstream Work Camp immediately, essentially as a cost-cutting measure. With the closure of the women's yard there was an opportunity to accommodate some of the returnees in a new enhanced privilege wing, and one of the staff took on the DECCA program.



Figure 16: Picnic facilities installed by prisoners at Deep Reach, in Millstream-Chichester Ranges National Park.

LOOKING OUT

- 5.27 It should be placed on public record that the last two years of operation of the Millstream Work Camp were especially productive with prisoners helping develop and install a number of new picnic, camping, toilet and lookout facilities and pathways at Deep Reach; restoration of pathways and bridges at the Chindewarriner Pool following a major flood; installation of reticulation for the homestead lawn, and manufacture and installation of metal bollards in all the car parking areas. Bollards made by prisoners were also used at the Hamersley Ranges National Park. Work campers continued to repair fencing after major floods and made a strong contribution to both wetland and dry land weed control. The prison's education unit were able to arrange accredited training for a number of these activities adding significantly to the value of the work experience and skills they acquired.
- 5.28 In this Office's discussions with the (now former) Department of the Environment and Conservation, it was clear the closure of Millstream was a significant loss to the continuing development and conservation of the national park which the Department has no resources to compensate. They were also left with a well-developed facility considered too expensive to dismantle which, while it may be a useful resource for youth or volunteer camps, is likely to require significant resources to manage and maintain. One questions whether such a decision does reflect good practice from a whole of government perspective.
- 5.29 RRP managers say they are looking forward to prisoners from the Town Work Camp contributing to the development of the newly declared Murujuga National Park on the Burrup Peninsula near Dampier. This would be welcomed, but with an hour's drive there and back, such a contribution will be hard to sustain and is likely to be relatively modest.
- 5.30 It was reported following the 2010 inspection that 'The Section 95 program was in much poorer health at Roebourne than observed in previous inspections.'⁶⁹ Despite having two Section 95 VSO positions, only one team was being taken out to pick up litter, in contrast to the rich range of trusty, community agency and project work activities undertaken in the past. Sadly, the program continued to decline. Over the last year or so prior to the 2013 inspection, parties of between one and five prisoners left the prison on average less than once a week to undertake "town duties" in Wickham, Roebourne or Karratha, or gardening duties at the Roebourne Police Station. This represents a significant reduction in reparative effort for local communities and agencies over recent years.
- 5.31 Section 95 appears to have suffered from the same squeeze of staff and financial resources that has impacted on industrial activities at Roebourne with positions being left vacant for longer to save money, and staff continuously being cross deployed to other areas, with DECCA, when it ran, favoured above traditional Section 95 activities. The Town Work Camp will provide an opportunity for renewal in this area, provided it is fully staffed and its staff are not habitually cross-deployed to cover vacancies in the main prison.

Recommendation 21

Staffing for industry, vocational training and external work should be fully restored, quarantined as far as practical from cross deployment to other duties and adequate relief arrangements established.

69 Ibid, 56.

LEARNING TO WORK (DECCA, TRAINING)

- 5.32 The 2010 inspection recognised that RRP had, in partnership with a number of agencies (including Rio Tinto), renovated the old DECCA site and effectively established an ongoing training system to skill prisoners for future employment. A good many successes were noted in prisoners obtaining and continuing in work on leaving prison. However, it noted that it was dependant on the efforts and enthusiasm of a handful of staff, that only one VSO was provided to DECCA and there was no relief staffing for that position.⁷⁰
- 5.33 Since that inspection, it has proved an ongoing struggle to keep DECCA functioning, and it has not generally been possible to provide both the traditional construction program (open to minimum-security prisoners of any background), and the Rio Tinto WorkReady program (open only to Indigenous prisoners) at the same time. Indeed there were some months when DECCA ceased to function, mainly due to staffing issues. Nevertheless, the WorkReady program ran twice per year in 2011 and 2012. Construction trainees continued to develop the site including construction of a large shed, a BBQ and patio area, a new shade house for horticulture, installation of a demountable and of a high roof over two others, and a row of concrete soil bins. A test plantation of Moringa trees, a biodiesel crop, was also successfully established.



Figure 17: The Moringa tree planting at DECCA.

70 Ibid, 58.

- 5.34 It was intended to keep DECCA functioning in 2013, including running a WorkReady program mid-year, but the VSO was called back to RRP after the sad passing of another VSO. It has therefore mainly operated in maintenance mode over the past year, and more recently a mothballing program involving small numbers of prisoners. Again while it was anticipated that training activities would continue at DECCA until it could be transferred to the Town Work Camp, they effectively ceased at least a year before the town camp would be ready. The prison's lease on DECCA runs to June 2014, after which time it reverts to its owners, the Ngarliyarndu Bindirri Aboriginal Corporation which hopes to use it as a training facility for Roebourne's youth.

GETTING SMART (EDUCATION)

A Sharp Reversal

- 5.35 Over the past 12 months, Roebourne Regional Prison has suffered considerable staffing disruption that has restricted the education and training services offered. This included the unexpected transfer of the Campus Manager on compassionate grounds in late 2012. The newly recruited Prisoner Education Coordinator (PEC) was appointed to act up as the Campus Manager on an acting basis before winning that position permanently in April 2013. DCS were unable to find a person to act as PEC on a casual basis and only managed to appoint a person to that position a month before the inspection. An appointment to the Aboriginal Education Worker (AEW) position was unsuccessful and it was filled for only a matter of weeks in the past year. The administrative position was also vacant for long periods throughout this 12-month period.
- 5.36 Vacancies for casual tutor roles have been very difficult to fill. There are only two tutors on staff at present and none in Adult Basic Education which puts great pressure on the sole PEC (another newcomer without previous prison experience). Recent changes to Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) rules mean that even casual tutors must be qualified with the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (or working towards at least part of it within two years to work under supervision of a qualified person).⁷¹ Roebourne has had some excellent casual tutors at times but has been unable to keep them; either because they have a qualification and have left to take permanent employment elsewhere, or because they have not had the required teaching qualification.
- 5.37 Pilbara Institute (formerly Pilbara TAFE) a major training provider for the prison, was not always able to provide staff needed for short courses, and lockdowns due to severe custodial staff shortages have sometimes prevented casual tutors and TAFE staff from entering the prison to deliver services. State Training Provider funded delivery has diminished considerably with the closure of DECCA and Millstream to the extent that 10,000 student curriculum hours were returned to Pilbara Institute this year.

71 Although this is only required where the tutor is providing assessment against units of competency from a training package.

LOOKING OUT

- 5.38 The results of these shortages have been drastic with the basic education role provided by the sole PEC being compromised for an extended period. The participation rate in education which was 22 per cent of population in July 2012, fell to only nine per cent in April 2013. Twenty two per cent was already low in comparison to Greenough, and Eastern Goldfields Regional Prisons which achieve 36 per cent participation in their better months, only dropping to 23–24 per cent in quiet months.
- 5.39 Practically the Education Centre has few full-time students, only one external student, and has delivered only a single traineeship over the past 12 months. As a result, prisoners seem to have given up on education as a realistic option to occupy their time, improve future prospects, and generate gratuities.
- 5.40 The lack of education and training being provided at RRP is particularly problematic given that 68 per cent of its prisoners at the time of the inspection had been assessed at risk due to low literacy scores. This percentage is similar to other prisons with high Indigenous populations such as Broome (88% at risk), West Kimberley (75%), Eastern Goldfields (71%), and Greenough (61%). Education and training must be a high priority at Roebourne. Industry demand for workers in the area is high and providing successful education and training programs has a good chance of impacting on employment outcomes for prisoners on release.

Positive Signs

- 5.41 A number of factors provide some hope for improvement in the near future. For example, housing is now available to full time staff on the same terms as other prison staff, which should improve staff recruitment and retention.
- 5.42 In addition the new work camp being built outside the prison gate should offer both desperately needed facilities for training and considerable project work in finishing the camp, at least in the initial stages. The Campus Manager also believes that a second PEC position will be tied to the new work camp as well as a number of additional VSOs. She believes that these VSOs will be funded by the Academy to do their Certificate IV Training and Assessment (TAE) at Karratha campus of Pilbara Institute and is hopeful of increased delivery of accredited training as a result.
- 5.43 The Drumbeat program co-delivered collaboratively by re-entry and education staff is also a great initiative. Participants benefit from a program that addresses re-integration skills and receive credit against the oral communication modules of the Entry to General Education for Adults.
- 5.44 There is a young and energetic team now in place who, despite their relative inexperience, have the required qualifications for their role. This offers hope of improvement in services quite soon. The promised second PEC for the work camp would also provide some local opportunities for backfill and succession planning.

Structural Changes Required

- 5.45 When very small teams requiring specialist skills and qualifications are affected by higher than usual turnover significant disruption will occur to the services provided by the team. The Roebourne Prison Education team is too small to be able to carry three vacancies out of four full time positions for long periods as it has recently. The failure by the Department to promptly fill these positions significantly impacted on the viability of the team.
- 5.46 Rules for employment of casuals are also too restrictive for this context. In the competitive environment of the Pilbara there are difficulties in recruiting tutors because of the expectation that they are part-time casuals paid for no longer than 11 weeks at a time, and usually only two days a week. This even applies for the adult and basic education function which generates sufficient work at RRP for a full time position and which, given the high percentage of the prison population that needs these services, is unlikely to change in future. The education centre needs to be able to employ suitable teachers on contract or for at least four days per week if they are available. It is also important to recruit and retain these staff to be available to backfill PECs for leave purposes. The only issue should be whether they can provide a service to prisoners that is acceptable. If a trial period shows the teacher can meet student's needs and attract students to classes, then they should be allowed the option of a long-term contract if they so desire. Casual staffing of teaching positions is an anomaly across the state that increases turnover, and in the Pilbara creates a constraint on the amount of time students have available to them.
- 5.47 The Department needs to address award and policy constraints that dictate that all teaching staff apart from PECs are employed as casual tutors.
- 5.48 Given the high proportion of Aboriginal prisoners at RRP, the prison needs to recruit and develop Indigenous education staff. Such a program could be wider than the actual prison, however, for example:
- Developing a group of local Aboriginal teachers in partnership with a university such as Charles Darwin University and employ a number as casuals while they study;
 - Working with Pilbara Institute to provide casual work to suitable students while they are enrolled in teacher's assistants and/or community services courses at Karratha or Roebourne; and
 - Liaising with local schools to build a larger pool of casual and relief local teachers and teacher's assistants.

Recommendation 22

Establish a staffing policy for education and vocational training at Roebourne Regional Prison that acknowledges the special difficulties of maintaining such a service in such an environment, reduces its exposure to vacancy management, has appropriate measures aimed at staff retention and includes an Indigenous recruitment and development component.

GETTING WORK ON THE OUTSIDE (EMPLOYMENT COORDINATOR, PEP)

- 5.49 When DECCA was fully operational at the time of the last inspection, RRP's Employment Coordinator assisted a great many prisoners obtain work on release from prison and supported them in the community over a considerable period in continuing their employment. The Prisoner Employment Program (PEP) which enables prisoners to commence paid employment, job seeking or external training in the months before their release had made a tentative start and employers were keen to engage. It was hoped that a forthcoming revision of PEP procedures would streamline cumbersome assessment processes. This was not to be. The assessment procedures were tightened and no simplification of processes was achieved. This Office is not aware that any PEP work placements have gone ahead since the last inspection.
- 5.50 Unfortunately, employment outcomes have considerably declined over the last three years. This is tied in part to the decrease and eventual cessation of DECCA as a training facility, staffing difficulties in the education area, as well as tightening of entrance requirements by certain local employers reducing eligibility of prisoners for employment. However, there have also been serious difficulties managing the role of the Employment Coordinator's position within the prison which has resulted in a progressive withdrawal of employment services to prisoners.



Figure 18: The patio and BBQ at DECCA – one of many construction projects undertaken there.

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- 5.51 This has caused real frustration to prisoners who repeatedly expressed a number of concerns around the fact that they were not provided any real assistance in gaining employment on release. These concerns included a lack of: work experience, assistance in developing their resume, training and assistance in finding and applying for work or appropriate training on release, and a lack of post-release support in employment or training. The re-entry contractor, Pilbara Community Services, who had previously provided some of these employment preparatory and referral services, were frustrated that they had been prevented from doing so when the Employment Coordinator position was established four years ago, and that their clients are no longer receiving an effective service.
- 5.52 Part of the problem appears that responsibility for the position of Employment Coordinator lies with a Perth-based manager, who is located within the Educational and Vocational Training Unit (EVTU) but it is Roebourne prison management which has been responsible for imposing controls on the role. The situation has been in train for most of the last three years, and sorely needs resolution to restore an essential service for prisoner rehabilitation.⁷²

Recommendation 23

Restore employment services to prisoners at Roebourne Regional Prison.

GOING HOME (RE-ENTRY/TRANSITION SERVICES)

- 5.53 DCS continues to outsource re-entry services for RRP to a local family-run service provider, now known as Pilbara Community Services (PCS), formerly the KDM Corporation. Their staff are based in two rooms opposite the Duty Office at the entry to industry/education. One of the rooms is large enough to accommodate a range of information sessions and workshops. PCS has also had difficulties with staffing over the years, but unlike the prison, has always managed to keep the period a position is vacant to a minimum. PCS work closely with RRP and appear to offer a good service to prisoners, but DCS Contracted Services planned to undertake a qualitative evaluation of the service later in 2013.
- 5.54 The Remand Re-entry service is one of five that DCS funds under its contract with PCS. It originally funded support to new remandees only for an initial two week period, but PCS made a case that support be extended to four weeks. This service includes an element of re-entry support, not just welfare support, which is the sole focus in the metro.
- 5.55 The re-entry pre-release support is the key service for prisoners, who are called to the next pre-release information session after their name appears on the TOMS pre-release report, six months before anticipated release. Prisoners may also request a service by completing a form. At an initial interview, prisoners are given the option to formally sign up for continuous support to prepare for their release in which case the worker will develop a case plan. Alternatively the prisoner may opt to participate with the re-entry provider on a casual basis only, in which case they are entitled only to attend certain information sessions. If they want help with documents or other practical help they need to sign up formally.

⁷² The Employment Coordinator was repositioned to education just prior to the inspection, potentially a positive first step, but the situation was far from being resolved.

LOOKING OUT

- 5.56 The provision of lifeskills courses is another funded service open to any prisoners, regardless of their re-entry status. PCS offer (or host) information workshops (pre-release, remand and occasionally parole), a fines enforcement workshop, Hip-Hop (health in prison/health out of prison), Drumbeat (personal wellness/overcoming addictions using drumming), Good Money (budgeting, by the Yaandina Aboriginal family centre), and a Centrelink workshop (including use of EBT cards). A psychologist from Mawarnkarra Health Service was running a number of workshops on topics including emotional health/drug and alcohol, family violence, parenting, suicide awareness/grief and anger management/self-esteem. Driver education was also being provided through Red Dirt, which is part of the Ngarliyarndu Bindirri Aboriginal Corporation. Six of a group of eight had just passed an exam to obtain their Learner's Permit and the others had another chance to sit the test.
- 5.57 While these workshops and activities are mainly facilitated by re-entry, the Transition Manager works with the re-entry contractor in maintaining relations with course providers and to cultivating new providers, as churn in capacity in both government and non-government agencies is a constant in the Pilbara.
- 5.58 The Transition Manager provides a complementary service to that offered by the re-entry provider by addressing welfare and re-entry needs for prisoners falling outside the contract or for those with more challenging needs. For example, he has issued an instruction in the prison that any referrals to certain residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation agencies go through him so as to maintain a consistent relationship with those agencies and to ensure referrals were done in accord with their requirements.
- 5.59 PCS employ three staff at their Wickham office to provide funded post-release re-entry service to prisoners released in the West Pilbara. There is also a full-time staff based in Newman to cover Newman, Jigalong and the desert and a casual was also being taken on to provide services in and around Port Hedland. Post-release re-entry support can extend for up to 12 months after release. We were told that over the previous 12-month period, they had 12 post-release clients in Hedland, 10 in Roebourne, 10 in Karratha, eight in Wickham, 15 in Newman and Jigalong and three or four in Onslow.
- 5.60 PCS are also responsible for the Transport Options (TOPS) program which accepts referrals from the Transitional Manager to repatriate prisoners back to their home communities when releases are planned. DCS appears to have developed good processes for ensuring that a fitness to travel assessment is completed and other risk information is provided to the contractor with such referrals. While TOPS generally works well for planned releases, the prison did have difficulty in making arrangements for unplanned releases, which often occurred following a court appearance by video link. These may not be referable to the TOPS contractor due to insufficient notice and while a lift can usually be arranged to Roebourne and adjacent towns in the East Pilbara, the only assistance for those travelling to other areas is a drop off and fare for the bus service from Roebourne. This bus only leaves at 10:20 pm on Wednesday and Friday if heading North (towards Port Hedland), or 5:45 am on Friday and Sunday for those heading South (Onslow or Carnarvon). Prisoners left in Roebourne the night before, sometimes don't make it onto the bus the next day and get stranded there, elevating the risk of early reoffending.

REHABILITATION IN CRISIS

5.61 Roebourne Regional Prison has the worst recidivism rate of any Western Australian Prison. The rate measures returns within a two-year period from time of release, which in this case was from June 2010 to May 2011, during which period the previous inspection was held. At that time, offender program provision at Roebourne was reasonably healthy and there were a good number of prisoners entering employment on release. Even so, some 44.1 per cent of Roebourne prisoners returned within a two-year period, either for new offences or following a parole cancellation. This performance is significantly worse than any other facility, and dramatically worse than the state average of 35.6 per cent. But as we have seen above, there has been a collapse in offender program provision and in training, preparation for employment and employment placements on release since that time, which may result in worse recidivism outcomes in the near future.

Table 13: Recidivism Rates – prison exits two years prior to period 01 Jun 2012 to 31 May 2013 by Aboriginality⁷³

	Exit			Return			Rate of Return		
	A	N	Total	A	N	Total	A	N	Total
Acacia Prison	211	336	547	112	98	210	53.08	29.17	38.39
Albany Regional Prison	24	44	68	11	16	27	45.83	36.36	39.71
Bandyup Women’s Prison	78	78	156	30	19	49	38.46	24.36	31.41
Boronia Pre- release Centre	28	72	100	10	18	28	35.71	25.00	28.00
Broome Regional Prison	255	11	266	99	4	103	38.82	36.36	38.72
Bunbury Regional Prison	28	151	179	13	39	52	46.43	25.83	29.05
Casuarina Prison	88	162	250	42	52	94	47.73	32.10	37.60
Eastern Goldfields Reg. Prison	175	28	203	81	4	85	46.29	14.29	41.87
Greenough Regional Prison	104	22	126	45	7	52	43.27	31.82	41.27
Hakea Prison	29	100	129	18	33	51	62.07	33.00	39.53
Karnet Prison Farm	17	132	149	3	32	35	17.65	24.24	23.49
Pardelup Prison Farm	4	25	29	1	5	6	25.00	20.00	20.69
Roebourne Regional Prison	183	12	195	80	6	86	43.72	50.00	44.10
Wooroloo Prison Farm	66	320	386	29	83	112	43.94	25.94	29.02
Total	1,290	1,493	2,783	574	416	990	44.50	27.86	35.57

73 Information supplied by DCS. Returns include Cancellation Early Release and exclude Suspension Early Release. Returns on account of Fine Default Only are excluded. Neither West Kimberley Regional Prison nor Wandoo Reintegration Facility, both opened in late 2012, have yet to appear on this chart. A=Aboriginal; N=Non-Aboriginal.

- 5.62 In 2010 we identified the lack of community housing options for released prisoners in the overheated housing market in the Pilbara, and a lack of addictions services engaging with prisoners prior to their release and providing post-release support.⁷⁴ These issues are still of acute concern for prisoners due to be released. The situation is now exacerbated by the lack of any offender program at RRP directly addressing addictions or family violence.
- 5.63 During the recent inspection, prisoners also emphasised the importance of having a driver's license on their release, and claimed quite reasonably that they had no prospect of obtaining or holding work without a licence. As a result they wanted solutions both for those who have never had a license, but also for those who have lost theirs through offending, sometimes for life. It was unstated, but it is equally the case, that a person able to drive has an important social role within their family and community and was therefore important for their reintegration. The resumption of driver training workshops by Red Dirt, a local Aboriginal agency for those released locally is therefore a positive measure. However, the number involved so far (one group of eight) is small and many prisoners will be released to other areas in the Pilbara. It is disappointing that plans over many years to facilitate driving lessons for minimum-security prisoners are still unrealised.
- 5.64 It is still the case, as discussed in the 2010 report, that there are a number of systems involved with prisoner re-entry which are not necessarily well integrated with each other, including the assessment and community corrections system, the transition management and re-entry services system, the employment placement system and the health re-entry system.⁷⁵ For the most part, this is successfully mediated through good communication but it will be interesting to hear if the new Case Management System due to be implemented in November will bring a greater degree of integration.

Recommendation 24

The reasons for poor recidivism outcomes at Roebourne Regional Prison should be reviewed, with input from relevant stakeholders. A rehabilitation strategy for Roebourne Regional Prison should be developed.

74 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 63, [7.55]–[7.56].

75 Ibid, 63, [7.57]–[7.58].

Chapter 6

MAKING IT WORK

BUSINESS PLANNING

- 6.1 Because of the high costs of providing services in regional WA, there needs to be a strong focus on performance. Largely because of staff allowances, but also reflecting freight and fuel, the cost of housing a prisoner at Roebourne is about 50 per cent higher than at Casuarina. There are strong social benefits in keeping Aboriginal prisoners in country and economic benefits to local communities through the provision of government services, but strategic questions regarding the purpose of regional prisons do not seem to feature in the Department's thinking (for example through the submission to the inspection).
- 6.2 The 2010 inspection recommended the development of a Pilbara custodial plan but this never eventuated.⁷⁶ Local staff continue to develop contacts between different DCS business units, for example by sharing training resources, but there is still no central or regional coordination of services. Given the tough economic outlook for the state, this would be an opportunity to achieve efficiencies.
- 6.3 Roebourne has a simple one-page business plan for 2012/13 which reflects the Department's corporate priorities and succinctly states Roebourne's purpose. At the time of the on-site phase of the inspection in September 2013, it had not yet published a 2013/14 plan, and this was said to be the result of a corporate plan not having been released. However, the 2012/13 plan continued to provide an appropriate guide to operations.
- 6.4 Roebourne has developed comprehensive financial plans covering future planned expenditure and tracking against past performance. However, there is little real control over the setting of the budget, with local management unable to influence the salary budget and the prison receiving several successive cuts to its budget. This is a reflection of the tough financial climate facing the state government.
- 6.5 Roebourne had been required to make savings of approximately \$650,000 in 2013/14 through a combination of vacancy management (43.7% through not filling positions immediately), overtime (5%) and non-salary costs (56.3%). These are significant savings to achieve. All DCS business units are affected by the savings.
- 6.6 Local management had previously identified the opportunity to make significant savings, for example by investing in solar panels. However, this would require a significant upfront cost with savings only developing over a number of years, and the Department's business case process is not configured to deal with that sort of request.
- 6.7 The finance coordinator had researched the Pilbara housing market and his analysis showed that while average rents in the Pilbara had decreased over the previous two years, the rates paid by the Department had remained static or had even increased. The Department has no control over this because it has to deal with the Department of Housing's Government Regional Officers Housing (GROH) scheme. Given that housing accounts for 33 per cent of the prison's total budget, there is enormous potential for savings if rental contracts were renegotiated on renewal. Discussions with the local shire indicated that they had made savings of over \$500,000 (23% of the housing budget) compared to 2012/13 by insisting on market rates.⁷⁷

76 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 9, Recommendation 1.

77 Discussion with CEO Shire of Roebourne 17 September 2013.

- 6.8 In a recent analysis of the Pilbara housing market, the Pilbara Development Commission reported:

Karratha's average advertised weekly rental has dropped for the seventh consecutive quarter, down from \$1,784 in the September 2011 quarter to \$1,285 in the latest quarter, which is the lowest since figures have been collected.

- 6.9 The Department's rental bill for Roebourne staff accommodation grew by 23 per cent between September 2011 and August 2013. Not all houses were continuously occupied, so it is possible that older, cheaper stock was replaced with newer stock. However, of the 53 houses continuously occupied by Departmental staff, the rents of 47 increased and only six decreased. This is clearly at odds with the behaviour of the local rental market. The increase of rentals accounts for about \$1.2 million per year. In the context of the requirement to make savings of \$650,000, it would seem that addressing the rising housing costs should be a priority for the Department. The Department is likely to be in a similar position to other government agencies and may be able to use collective negotiating power or consider service providers.

Recommendation 25

DCS should develop a stronger negotiating stance with GROH to make savings within the rental budget.

LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.10 The previous inspection noted serious concerns regarding the functioning of the senior management team and recommended that the Department:

Develop and implement strategies at both departmental and prison levels to stabilise and harmonise the leadership team at Roebourne; develop good processes for communication and cooperation; and build up peoples' sense of commitment to their colleagues, their managers and their work.⁷⁸

- 6.11 Following the 2010 inspection and intervention by head office, a communication plan was created which provides clear accountabilities for named managers. Despite being overdue for review, having expired in December 2012, it was still being followed for the most part at the time of the inspection.⁷⁹ A daily meeting between the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, the Business Manager and sometimes the Security Manager was the centre-piece which ensured communication and cooperation among a team that had been fractious. Senior management were also reportedly more visible in the prison than before, visiting units and other areas on a reasonably regular basis. This significantly strengthened the leadership and administration of the prison, despite continuing personal antipathy between two of the parties which was only recently resolved when a position was

78 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 18, Recommendation 7.

79 In response to the draft, DCS stated that a 2013 communications plan existed. Upon requested a plan dated 1st December 2012 to 31 December 2013 was forwarded with a review date of December 2013. It is almost identical to the earlier plan except that the title of the Assistant Superintendent was changed from ASPM to ASO and the terms of reference for a bi-monthly Women's Management Meeting was deleted.

vacated. Staff also made positive comments regarding the daily visibility of the A/Assistant Superintendent Operations and A/Security Manager around the prison. This helps to address issues at an early stage and spread a consistent message from management.

- 6.12 The plan was largely followed, but there was evidence that meetings of some groups with their managers were not occurring suggesting a failure in governance. This was raised with the Superintendent and will hopefully be addressed. There was also an over-reliance on email to communicate the results of meetings. While it is inevitable that email would be the primary means of communication given the need to ensure that accurate records are shared with a diverse, shift-working workforce, there is also a need for communication to be bolstered by other means.

Table 14: Roebourne staff survey 2013 – views on relations with line management and local management

	2013 (%)			2010 (%)			WA Average (%)		
	Good	Mixed	Poor	Good	Mixed	Poor	Good	Mixed	Poor
Support from their line manager	51	22	27	51	28	17	55	33	13
Communication with their line manager	54	24	22	54	50	17	57	39	15
Support from local management	38	24	38	28	50	22	36	40	26
Communication with local management	38	27	35	33	39	28	31	40	29

- 6.13 The consensus view of staff was that the management team was more functional now compared to the previous inspection, but some staff still felt that some matters were still not being effectively addressed. Many expressed respect for senior management, but there were unresolved grievances and concerns about the management culture at the prison. The 2013 staff survey indicates a polarisation of opinion about communication and support from local management, with higher numbers reporting both positive and negative views (see table above).
- 6.14 During the inspection, few officers said they interacted well with administration and that they would not attend administration unless they really had to. Whilst many of the staff said that there had been improvement in this area because the admin had been more stable over the past 12 months, they were still critical of the style of communication from admin to staff and often felt they were being bullied when they approached admin.
- 6.15 This Office is very aware that the manner of delivery of instructions or questions can be misread as bullying, however in some of the cases raised by staff there was a commonality of themes that suggested bullying was present. It is also essential that managers challenge poor performance and inappropriate absence levels. However, the way in which this is done shows an over-reliance on a punitive or adversarial approach and has been interpreted as bullying by some. This may not be the most effective way in dealing with people from different generations, genders or cultural backgrounds.

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- 6.16 These management problems cannot be considered in isolation from other issues such as sickness levels. The physical remoteness of Roebourne and the nature of the closed environment means that managers do not have ready access to counsel and feedback. Staff with supervisory responsibilities need the tools to hold their staff to account for performance: the Department needs to develop models of how to hold conversations with staff member about work requirements, document those discussions and then follow up.
- 6.17 Implicit in the 2010 recommendation was the need for further leadership training and change management for the prison more broadly. This was acknowledged in the Department's action plan which indicated that strategies were developed and implemented during March 2011 to enable staff to engage in team building.⁸⁰ However, in June 2012, and again in January 2013, Departmental status updates noted that budgetary constraints prevented the delivery of change management and leadership training.
- 6.18 After some confusion about 'what type of training is required and available', it was noted in June 2013, after documentation was requested for the present inspection that 'Head Office has advised the prison that its management needs to undertake equal opportunity and anti-bullying training.'⁸¹ This training was to be arranged to occur by 31 December 2013.⁸² Considering this Office's serious concerns about the leadership function at the time of the last inspection, it is disappointing that the subject was allowed to drift for such a long time.

CUSTODIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- 6.19 Roebourne opened with a design capacity of 116. There were only 75 cells, including those reserved for observation and multi-purpose regimes, and multiple occupancy (up to four in larger cells) cells were integral to the design. DCS on its website states that the operational capacity is 161 as at 2 October 2013, achieved through increased multiple-occupancy of cells, with four-out cells, for example, typically accommodating six prisoners in bunk beds.⁸³ In recent years it has typically accommodated 150–160 prisoners but much higher peaks have been known.⁸⁴ At the time of the inspection, RRP accommodated 169 prisoners. Beyond operational capacity, prisoners have mainly had to sleep on mattresses on the floor.
- 6.20 As noted in the introduction, overcrowding had eased prior to the inspection due to a combination of a relatively low prisoner population, the conversion of Unit 2 to accommodate medium-security prisoners and the creation of an enhanced privilege yard for male prisoners, following displacement of all but a handful of women on short remands to other facilities, notwithstanding the return of some from the Millstream Work Camp. The development of the Town Work Camp with an initial capacity of 30 minimum-security prisoners represents a significant increase in both design capacity and 'operational capacity'.

80 DCS, *Action Plan Template: OICS, Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) Recommendation 7, dated 20/06/2013.

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

83 <http://www.correctiveservices.wa.gov.au/prisons/prison-locations/roebourne.aspx>

84 191 were accommodated in the facility on the evening of 23 February 2011.

6.21 An analysis of the origins of Aboriginal prisoners indicated that almost a third of those from the Pilbara was resident at other facilities as shown in the table below.⁸⁵ This was for a number of factors including a lack of capacity at RRP, the displacement of women following the closure of the women’s yard at RRP, those with maximum-security ratings unable to be accommodated at RRP, those with high needs (mental health, physical health, behavioural, protection issues) unable to be managed at RRP, and those unable to undertake programs at RRP. There were also prisoners with strong personal links in other areas or otherwise expressing a preference to remain in a prison or work camp in another region.

Table 15: Location of Pilbara Aboriginal prisoners on 15 August 2013

Facility	Female	Male	Total	Per cent (%)
Acacia	-	9	9	6.00
Albany	-	3	3	2.00
Bandyup	1	-	1	0.67
Boronia	1	-	1	0.67
Bunbury	-	2	2	1.33
Casuarina	-	5	5	3.33
EGRP	-	1	1	0.67
Greenough	7	6	13	8.67
Hakea	-	5	5	3.33
Karnet	-	3	3	2.00
Roebourne	4	98	102	68.00
WKRP	1	4	5	3.33
Total	14	136	150	100.00
Per cent (%)	9.33	90.67	100.00	

6.22 Prison management in its presentation to the inspection team, indicated that its priority when the work camp was fully operational was to return as many Pilbara prisoners, other than the women, to Roebourne as possible. Most of those presently occupying the enhanced privilege wing will be eligible for transfer into the work camp, so the importance of this wing in the prison accommodation hierarchy for males will be diminished, and there is an opportunity, should suitable resources be applied, to reopen the women’s yard and include displaced Pilbara women in this return to country. As for other displaced persons, their needs will have to be balanced with a need to reduce overcrowding at RRP and in the prison system generally. The kind of extended multiple-occupancy of cells well beyond the facility’s design capacity is an aberration from decent practice that should be remedied.

85 Data downloaded from TOMS on 15 August 2013 and based on the last known address given by each prisoner on admission. On 15 August 2013, RRP had a population of 147, of whom 102 were Aboriginal people from the Pilbara, 24 were Aboriginal people from other regions and 21 were non-Aboriginal people. The way in which the data was downloaded unfortunately did not include last known address postcodes of non-Aboriginal prisoners.

- 6.23 This Office has noted in the past that a majority of RRP prisoners hail from the Eastern parts of the Pilbara and the main sentencing court is based in South Hedland – two matters that should inspire regional custodial infrastructure planning.⁸⁶ The aging and increasingly substandard infrastructure of the present facility at RRP is another. The displacement of women from their home region is now an additional factor that must loom large in any future planning. Perhaps a dual-purpose remand and women’s facility is required in South Hedland.

Recommendation 26

Develop a Pilbara Custodial Plan in consultation with relevant community organisations and stakeholders. As part of this plan, give consideration to establishing a new facility in the Port Hedland region, constructing a replacement prison at Roebourne and an appropriate facility for women.

THE TOWN WORK CAMP

- 6.24 Local management has long desired to have a separate minimum-security area similar to Unit 6 at the front of Greenough Regional Prison or the Pre-release Unit at Bunbury Regional Prison. OICS in the past has noted that the minimum-security prisoners at Roebourne felt they were being treated as mediums and have not enjoyed later lockdowns or other privileges that befits their status. It also considered that a minimum-security unit had potential to further initiatives in prisoner employment, training and community work and to help relieve overcrowding in the existing facility.⁸⁷
- 6.25 DCS applied to the Royalties for Regions to fund such a facility soon after the 2010 inspection and by April 2011, funding was secured for the construction and first three years of operation of a Work Camp at the front of RRP. A work camp was considered to offer a more direct benefit to the community than just an extension of the prison’s accommodation for a particular class of prisoners. It also offers greater flexibility and efficiencies in its operating model. Its design was based on the proven design of the Wyndham, Wheatbelt and Warburton work camps with accommodation for 30 prisoners and room for expansion to 40. It would feature an especially large workshop space and training facility to continue the excellent training then available at DECCA.
- 6.26 The operating philosophy of the Roebourne Work Camp recognises cultural responsibilities, spiritual relationship to land, sea and waterways, kinship and family responsibilities and community responsibilities of its future work campers and states:

The Roebourne Work Camp provides suitably selected and low-risk prisoners and community offenders with opportunities to participate in work camp activities that will make reparation to the community and develop employment skills and work ethic that will provide considerable benefits to the Pilbara economy and regional communities.⁸⁸

86 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 9–10, [2.10]–[2.15] and Recommendation 1.

87 Ibid, 9, [2.17]–[2.18] and Recommendation 2. The project includes construction of an external bulk store for RRP, also the subject of an inspection recommendation at *ibid*, 16, [2.42] and Recommendation 6.

88 DCS, *Roebourne Work Camp, Operational Brief* (February 2013) 4–5.

6.27 It also has a strong rehabilitation ethic stating in part:

The facility will assist in greater access to family and provide a greater range, and more culturally appropriate regimes and services to address offending behaviour. Priority is given to the maintenance and strengthening of relationships between offenders, their families and the communities they will eventually return to and increase the opportunity for positive behavioural change.⁸⁹

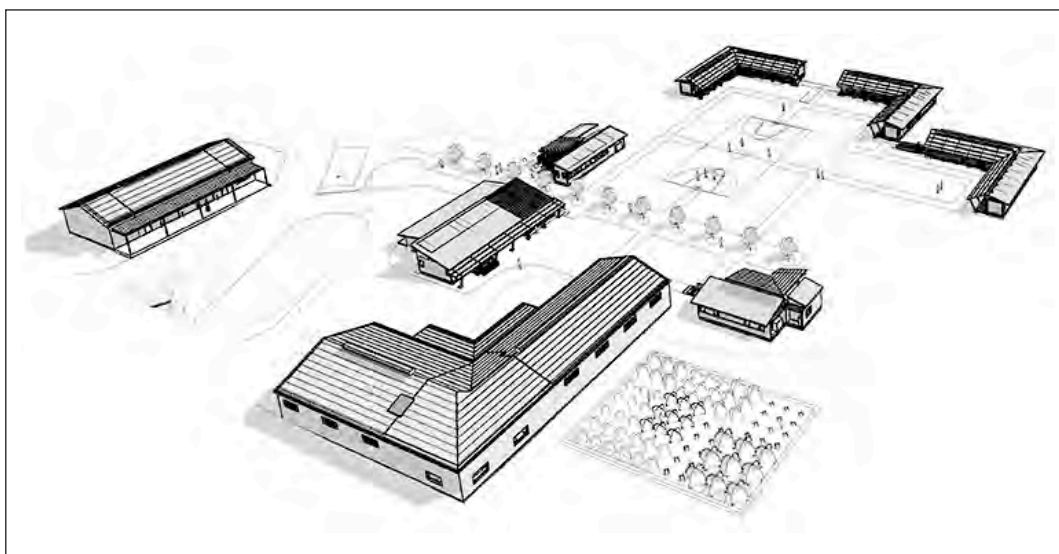


Figure 19: Conceptual drawing of the Roebourne Work Camp.⁹⁰

6.28 It was hoped that site works would commence in mid-2011 for completion by late 2013, but the project paused for a time while the Department considered its impact on its operating resources once Royalties for Regions funding ran out. There were also native title clearances to obtain and a requirement to upgrade the prison's water supply system. The project was further delayed by contract negotiations over the cost of construction. Construction did, however, commence in April 2013 and was on track at the time of the inspection to be completed in December 2013, or possibly mid-January 2014.

6.29 The Department did not provide RRP with a project manager for the work camp project and as a result this has been a significant abstraction from the Superintendent's workload. At the time of the on-site phase of the inspection, the Superintendent received approval for a project manager. However, this was only some three months before the completion of construction. The Banksia Hill Inquiry identified the perilous risks of overburdening the Superintendent with too many responsibilities.⁹¹ Fortunately, however, the construction project was entirely outside the perimeter and presented little operational risk to the prison.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 5.

⁹⁰ Downloaded from <http://www.cooperoxley.com.au/?portfolio=roebourne-regional-camp>. This diagram does not include the high perimeter fence. Cooper and Oxley are the construction company and the cost of the build is \$13M. Cox Howlett & Bailey Woodland (Cox) and Design Management Group (DMG) provided architectural services.

⁹¹ OICS, *Directed Review into an Incident at Banksia Hill Detention Centre on 20 January 2013*, Report No. 85 (July 2013) 82.

- 6.30 An examination of the plans for the development of the work camp found that comprehensive planning went into the project. However, it does not address questions about RRP's ability to fill the work camp with appropriately qualified prisoners. There were only 33 minimum-security prisoners at RRP on 18 September 2013 during the inspection week. In order to make best use of the new facility and offer the best service to minimum-security prisoners, it is essential that the Department substantively delivers its operational philosophy and targets an appropriate prisoner cohort.
- 6.31 There will also be risks associated with proximity of the Work Camp to the prison. We have found that Section 95 activities, the DECCA program, education, employment, training and even report writing in the prison have been continually undermined by cross-deployment of staff in these areas to cover custodial staff vacancies. The Work Camp will have to effectively be quarantined from such cross-deployment if it is ever to reach its potential.
- 6.32 An appropriate staffing model had been established at the time of the inspection but it was concerning that positions had not yet been finalised or approved by the DCS Commissioner's Executive Team. This was still the case in early November 2013. Any further delays will extend the process of recruitment and establishment of staff, including their accommodation well past the date when the facility will be completed and proven for occupation. One matter has however, been cleared up since the inspection. The original design brief did not include air-conditioning in the prisoner accommodation. Each room will now have its own split system installed.

MAINTENANCE AND MINOR WORKS

- 6.33 Roebourne opened in 1984 and the infrastructure has become tired and requires significant investment. Efforts have been made to remediate some of the items touched on in this regard in the 2010 report, not always successfully and others continue to be neglected. The replacement of the old wooden cyclone shutters with metal ones that warp and a fastening system that risks injury is one example of a less than successful remediation; repeated efforts to bring the oval up to a safe and effective standard is another.
- 6.34 The prison does have a maintenance plan for prison-level inspection and maintenance throughout the year but there was this had not been fully realised. As discussed above (at 2.36), replacement of cell furniture is unfinished and significant resources are needed to bring all cells up to a good standard, including for example replacement of linoleum in many cells. Rusted poles remain unfixed, some ablution stalls still lack doors, flyscreens in cells are torn, and unit BBQs have not been replaced after almost three years. As part of the custodial staffing review, RRP is proposing to extend the maintenance role to provide a seven day per week service.
- 6.35 The prison has also had to address a number of maintenance requirements over the last 12 months not factored in such as removal and replacement of asbestos fittings in some of the ablution blocks and major repairs and upgrades that were required for the water supply. Resources also had to be found for the conversion of Unit 2 to a medium-security yard. Resources for such major repairs have to be found through the Department's Infrastructure Services division in competition with other priorities, especially those endorsed in its annual funding round.

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- 6.36 A proposal by RRP management to build an interview room for each unit in the current financial year was not funded. Nor, as we discussed above (at 2.50), was an earlier bid to retrofit air-conditioning in the units. Yet clearly, a wholesale modernisation of units appears warranted at RRP. This should include a full renovation of beds, fittings, fixtures, doors (in Unit 1), windows, screens and floor coverings in cells and ablution areas, the installation of air-conditioning in all cells, the development of sizable air-conditioned indoor spaces and the addition of interview rooms and possibly program or activity rooms. A proper turf replacement may also have to be funded to bring the centre oval to a safe and usable standard.
- 6.37 The previous inspection also recommended the expansion of industries and vocational skills and programs inside the prison, for medium-security prisoners, and the relocation of stores outside the gate to facilitate such an expansion.⁹² A new outside store was included in the construction of the work camp which will allow such an expansion to take place. However, a new industry and employment plan will now be needed to determine how best to utilise available space in the short-term and guide the expansion or development of workshops and training facilities. As the upgrade to the water supply is completed, it will also be time to reconsider the role of horticulture in the facility. A footpath is also needed to facilitate safe testing of zone alarms as the poor condition of the ground creates a tripping risk to staff conducting these essential patrols.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION

Staffing, Leave and Overtime

- 6.38 The Department periodically reviews staffing levels in prisons, with the results of a prison officer review finalised in 2012 and an administrative staff review current at the time of the inspection. The custodial review followed extensive internal consultation and provided an accepted basis across the organisation for staffing levels. The custodial staffing ratio is consistent with other prisons but RRP was recommended to receive new Videolink and Laundry VSO positions.
- 6.39 Roebourne's workforce contains a significant proportion of women, with 33 per cent of prison officers and VSOs female. Female staff reported that there was no problem in organising duties to avoid all-female crews. The difficulties in recruiting Aboriginal staff in a custodial setting are well documented, and with only four per cent of staff identifying as Aboriginal it is essential that the Department resources appropriate recruitment mechanisms to improve this ratio.
- 6.40 Roebourne relies heavily on the use of overtime to maintain required staffing levels. This replaces staff who are absent because of sickness, workers compensation or who are seconded elsewhere. Over a three week period covering the on-site phase of the inspection, an average of 4.2 shifts per day were worked on overtime. This has an enormous human impact on staff wellbeing in addition to financial costs. Staff may become reliant on overtime and if this was lost it would have a significant effect on take home pay levels for many staff.

92 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 15–16, [2.40]–[2.42] and Recommendation 6.

- 6.41 Compared to the 2010 inspection, staff survey responses indicated an increase in the proportion of staff working ‘one or more shifts per week’ or ‘once a month’ and a decrease in the response ‘infrequently’ or ‘I don’t do overtime.’ Compared to state averages, the survey also indicates that staff at Roebourne work more overtime than those at other prisons. Overtime obviously has an effect on pay. The staff survey reported that ‘pay and conditions’ rated as the most satisfying thing about working at Roebourne, followed by ‘colleagues’ and ‘assisting prisoners’. Staff were enthusiastic about their pay, with staff pointing to the provision of free housing and a district allowance of \$16,275 (\$32,550 for an officer with dependents). However, the human cost of sustained long hours needs to be managed to maintain employee wellbeing.

Table 16: RRP staff personal leave for 2012–2013⁹³

Leave Type	Security	VSO	Subtotal	Admin	Total
(by hours taken)	(Prison Officers)		(POs)		
Sick Leave	8,110	810	8,920	1,866	10,786
Carer’s Leave	1,421	78	1,499	40	1,539
Other Personal	3,099	725	3,824	623	4,447
Total	12,630	1,613	14,243	2,529	16,772
Number of staff	64	9	73	12	85
Average hours taken	197.3	179.2	195.1	210.8	197.3

- 6.42 Prison officers are entitled to up to 140 hours personal leave (or 11.67 x 12 hour shifts) and public servants are entitled to 112.5 (15 x 7.5 hour days) personal leave per annum.⁹⁴ The above table shows that personal leave in 2012–13 was taken at a rate much higher than their annual entitlement. This is additional to an annual leave entitlement of seven weeks for shift staff and five weeks for others and long service leave available after seven years of service. Nor is Worker’s Compensation leave included. These levels of personal leave are therefore unsustainable both for the individuals and for the prison and are clear indications of a system in crisis.
- 6.43 Local management properly flagged sick leave as a major cause of absence which needs to be filled with overtime shifts. However, an examination of HR records showed that the secondment of staff to other positions and vacancies accounted for a similar proportion of absences as sick leave. Only 38 per cent of staff survey respondents believed that coverage of their position while on leave or absent operated effectively. The inspection team also heard of particular concerns from the VSO workforce, who did not have relief components built into their role. This meant that when they were on leave or temporarily

93 DCS, *Information on Roebourne Prison for OICS, Resources and Systems 1.7* (7/7/2013) provided per OICS document request, RRP 2013 Inspection. The average was calculated based on information provided and shown in 7.5 hour days for clarity. Staff employed by other parts of DCS, such as health and education staff are not included in this table.

94 The Department of Corrective Services Prison Officers’ Enterprise Agreement 2013 provides an additional one-off personal leave entitlement of up to 528 hours of personal leave after the first four years of service. Personal leave can only be taken in certain circumstances such as illness, bereavement, primary care, compassionate, planned personal leave.

redeployed into other roles, their core role was not covered. This lack of coverage was stressful for staff who took pride in their work and continued to receive requests to cover their core duties while deployed elsewhere. There needs to be clear guidance from management to inform all staff when a role is not being covered.⁹⁵

- 6.44 The HR Alesco system records the three-weekly roster pattern and has the capability to produce colour-coded reports that can highlight patterns of absence. An examination of records showed a small number of clusters where overtime shifts were worked immediately before or immediately after an absence. This may indicate exhaustion or manipulation of the system, neither of which are desirable. The prison management is monitoring sickness absence levels and asking questions of individuals with high absence rates. During the on-site phase of the inspection, management introduced a new procedure to limit the number of overtime shifts that would be funded per day to replace sickness absence. This is an innovative step and prioritises overtime to be used to cover secondments, with the obvious intention of sending a message to staff that sickness absence is being monitored.
- 6.45 Some claims were made that rotting is taking place but an examination of the records did not support this for the most part. Given the scope to upset employee relations, this is an area where good industrial advice is required and the Department should take the lead in developing corporate processes for absence management which follow best practice. While the willingness of management to have difficult conversations with staff is laudable, it can contribute to a sense of bullying rather than legitimate conversations about management support and employee contribution.
- 6.46 In common with other prisons, the inspection team heard that recruitment processes were slow and were held up by funding and recruitment freezes. This particularly affects the recruitment of public servants, who are recruited directly by the prison. Only three per cent of staff survey respondents believed that recruitment processes operated effectively. One member of staff cited the inability to secure permanent employment after almost two years on rolling contracts as an important factor in deciding to leave their job. In late 2012 and early 2013, a number of custodial staff from Roebourne accepted positions at the new West Kimberley Regional Prison at Derby. Despite having a healthy transfer list of officers interested in working at RRP, there were considerable delays before transfers were offered and accepted, housing allocated and new staff were able to commence on shift.

Performance Management and Training

- 6.47 In common with other recent inspections by this Office, the Department's Performance and Development System (PADS) was universally disliked. Staff did not consider that it provided any value for them, for example leading to recommendations that would not be actioned, or involving perverse tasks such as appraising an officer whom the supervisor had not worked with. PADS is not consistently used when allocating training and development resources, making decisions regarding selection and promotion, or in helping individuals to plan their future development. In addition to goal setting and appraisal of effectiveness, contemporary performance management practice includes motivation, coaching, future skills development and also links to promotion.

95 In response to the draft text, DCS stated: "Re-deployment of staff due to daily vacancies is well documented in Local Orders."

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- 6.48 The Department has arguably designed a process that delivers the minimum requirements of the Public Sector Commission’s performance management standard without providing any real public value. Given the considerable challenges facing the Department in terms of the retention and development of a skilled workforce, the performance development system needs to be integrated across all areas of performance and personal development.
- 6.49 Roebourne has an enthusiastic and knowledgeable satellite training officer (who reports to the DCS Academy), with the locally appointed training officer position currently vacant following transfer. His focus is on maintaining currency in courses which the Department has identified as a priority. Effective records were kept of courses delivered and officers requiring training. The trainer had a full calendar of activities that addressed generic prison issues (such as breathing apparatus and resuscitation) and Pilbara-specific issues (such as cyclone awareness and four wheel drive training).
- 6.50 The local trainers deliver most sessions during the weekly lockdown. The sessions have recently increased from two hours to three, following a change in policy. This was reported to be working well and allowed sufficient time for the trainer to tailor the training to requalification requirements and contemporary issues. There is also a wide range of professional development courses available through the Corrective Services Academy, with regional presentations of selected courses at Karratha and Port Hedland. Staff spoke of the difficulty of getting courses at the Academy because of the cost of travel and inability to backfill their position. Training requests therefore need to be driven by strong business cases.
- 6.51 The previous inspection recommended ‘more extensive training at Roebourne with respect to ... cultural awareness (using local Aboriginal providers if possible) and ... customer service techniques.’⁹⁶ The Department supported the recommendation, but given the fact its response partly relied on the training of new recruits or existing staff attending the Academy in Perth, it did not realistically address the needs of the majority of Roebourne’s workforce. It did recognise the role of the satellite trainer but little progress had been made since 2010. However, during the time of the on-site phase of the inspection, the Roebourne Prison and the Academy reached agreement on the delivery of a Pilbara-specific cultural awareness program, an excellent, if overdue result. This should be evaluated and if successful should be considered for other DCS units and other government agencies
- 6.52 Management took a close interest in the selection of staff to act in supervisory roles. The decisions to select key roles in management and senior officer rank were respected by the workforce. It is noted that the Department supported Recommendation 4 of the 2012 Wooroloo inspection to provide supervisors training to senior officers and acting senior officers.⁹⁷ This training would also help to address the widespread reports of a bullying culture. However, it is still neither automatically provided, nor compulsory.

96 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 19, Recommendation 8.

97 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 80 (August 2012), Recommendation 4.

6.53 In the 2013 pre-inspection staff survey staff reported that they were adequately trained in the use of restraints, use of chemical agents, CPR, first aid and cultural awareness. However, less than half reported adequate training in use of breathing apparatus; emergency response–fire natural disaster; emergency response–loss of control; occupational health and safety; interpersonal skills, management of prisoners with drug issues, and management of prisoners with mental health issues. There were significant declines in their perceptions of adequacy of training in a number of areas. This is worrying and warrants close attention by local management and the Academy.⁹⁸

Staff Support and Grievances

6.54 A number of staff gave evidence to the inspection that there were continuing problems with bullying. Many of these matters had been reported to local Grievance Officers, local prison management and head office for resolution or investigation. A number of these allegations were focussed on senior prison officials. In addition, the inspection was told of serious relational conflicts between staff, including matters arising from outside of the workplace. Perceived unfairness in housing allocations was one source for this.

6.55 In 2011, an internal compliance review by the Department’s Professional Standards Division found areas for improvement in staff anti-bullying strategies. Deficiencies included planning, training and, record-keeping. A follow-up review in 2012 found significant improvements. Local policies and procedures provided oversight of activity and Grievance Officers had been appointed.

Table 17: Roebourne staff survey 2013 – ability to express and resolve work-related grievances

	2013 (%)	2010 (%)	WA (%)
Able to resolve grievances	53	39	60

6.56 The Roebourne staff survey in 2013 found a significant increase in the proportion who thought staff were able to express and resolve their work-related grievances, at 53 per cent, up from 39 per cent in 2010. It is still lower than the state average of 60 per cent. This concurs with comments that things have improved since 2010 but that problems still exist.

Recommendation 27

Implement effective HR strategies to reduce bullying, improve performance, minimise vacancies and manage absences.

98 In response to the draft, DCS stated, and it is accepted that: “Not all staff are qualified to be continually trained in B/A.” In addition, DCS stated: “All mandatory and local training is addressed with those staff qualified to do so as per the training calendar. OSH is one area that is constantly addressed.”

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

- 6.57 Operational records are recorded contemporaneously on the TOMS (for general prisoner management issues) or ECHO (health related) databases. There is no single system for business systems, for example HR, purchasing, invoices. While the respective systems ensure integrity of the information, this often requires multiple data entry. Administrative staff spoke of the need for training in basic HR and finance matters, including how to correctly record details on the computer system.
- 6.58 Hard copy files are used to record business decisions. This includes a high volume of business cases with external approval being required for many projects of a minor nature. There are good controls in place to ensure that purchases are appropriately authorised. These practices ensure the integrity of information. However, there are opportunities to improve the efficiency of records management.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

- 6.59 The pre-inspection survey found very high levels of perceived safety: 95 per cent of staff survey respondents reported that they ‘mostly feel safe’ or ‘almost always feel safe.’ Since the 2010 inspection, the proportion who report higher levels of safety has increased. This was supported by comments from focus groups.
- 6.60 Roebourne has an Occupational Safety and Health committee. There are monthly meetings and quarterly inspections of workplaces. Work areas have nominated safety and health representatives and training is available for them through a five-day course at the Academy. There is no dedicated OSH Coordinator position (as is the case in larger prisons such as Casuarina) and responsibility for the OSH function lies with the Business Manager.
- 6.61 Different areas of the prison are represented on the OSH committee, including custodial staff, medical, administration and teaching.
- 6.62 In staff surveys, 54 per cent of respondents felt that occupational health and safety processes work effectively at Roebourne. Data is not available for other prisons across the state or from the 2010 inspection.
- 6.63 An examination of minutes and other records from the OSH committee found that the agenda generally reflected appropriate issues. This included decisions to address problems immediately without having to go through a formal hazard notification process. However, there were a small number of maintenance issues that did not require to be tracked through the OSH committee. The purpose of the committee is to review safety matters at a higher level and make recommendations to the employer on policies and procedures to apply across the workplace.
- 6.64 In addition to training delivered through the Entry Level Training Program (for prison officers and VSOs), the local satellite trainer delivers OSH training for any staff who are not safety and health representatives.

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- 6.65 The committee appeared to be operating effectively, and as discussed above (at 2.25), WorkSafe were invited to inspect the laundry prior to the inspection. A number of improvement notices had been issued which covered hazards relating to storage practices, lack of procedures or equipment to deal with hazardous materials, fire extinguisher testing, and procedures to prevent the use of faulty equipment. The Department was given between two and four months to rectify the problems, indicating a reasonably pressing priority.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 6.66 There is no coordinated plan which addresses sustainability at Roebourne. The Finance Coordinator and Business Manager have identified the significant costs of utilities but have minimal control over them. For example, photovoltaic cells could reduce electricity consumption but this would require investment which would only break even over several years. There is no facility for this type of enterprise to be managed at the prison level.
- 6.67 Inefficiencies in the water system were addressed through a remedial capital works project which has provided a new water system. This will reduce water wastage.
- 6.68 Roebourne's infrastructure dates from the 1980s. Units are not well insulated, leading to complaints of extremes of cold and heat. From previous visits by this Office, it is known that accommodation units become oppressively hot in the summer. While there is no quick-fix for these poorly insulated buildings, energy efficiency must be a priority for future development as energy costs continue to rise.

Recommendation 28

Consider capital works investments to reduce the long term costs of utilities.

CONTRABAND, DISCIPLINE AND SECURITY

Gatehouse

- 6.69 Gatehouse staff are tasked with multiple security functions as well as reception duties for the prison. In respect to the former, we observed searching of vehicles entering and leaving the prison, records kept at the gate and surveillance systems constantly being monitored. We are told that staff are selected at random at the beginning of each shift for a bag search and pat search. A drug dog attended a week before the inspection to screen social visitors.
- 6.70 In relation to the reception role, the report of the 2010 inspection stated that the quality of customer service lacked consistency and the feedback from visitors was mixed. Training in customer service techniques along with Aboriginal cultural awareness was recommended generally for RRP staff.⁹⁹ While the action plan for this recommendation stated that customer service training is scheduled on the Academy's training calendar and available to all staff who require it, no RRP staff have had the opportunity to do this.¹⁰⁰

99 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 19, [3.15] and Recommendation 8.

100 DCS, *Action Plan Template*; OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) Recommendation 8. As at 19/07/2013.

- 6.71 Nevertheless, feedback from visitors and experience and observation in the present inspection gave no cause for concern. Indeed staff were polite, courteous and helpful to those entering the prison. For example, staff left the confines of the middle gate area to enter the front area of the gate to help social visitors complete their required forms. This gives a more personal touch rather than speaking through glass and trying to direct the visitor as to what they need to do.

Security Routines

- 6.72 Roebourne conducts a count of all prisoners in cell before the morning unlock and three others as part of the structured day, at 11:45 am before lunch, 3:30 pm before recreation commences and one 7:00 pm at lockup. Checks are also conducted during the night. Extra checks or counts can be called at any time. Room inspections are carried out each morning which assists them with controlling the amount of items prisoners have in their rooms along with maintaining the cleanliness of the room. Officers at Roebourne Regional Prison search two or more cells and one common area in each unit per day in accordance with Policy Directive 23 (PD 23). These are selected essentially at random, ensure every cell is covered over a period, with more attention paid if indicated by intelligence received.
- 6.73 All visitors are wanded upon entry and asked to declare any unauthorised items in their possession. Five or six visitors per day are also pat searched, and if there is cause for concern, or intelligence held, a visitor may be strip searched, or denied entry if they refuse. The drug detection dog with handler is a great help in screening visitors, but is available less than is desirable.
- 6.74 All prisoners entering RRP are strip searched. Most leaving the prison on escort are also strip searched, but a pat search may sometimes be used for those leaving on Section 95 work placements or recreation. Strip searches are also conducted when prisoners enter MPU or observations cells, as part of the urine testing procedure or whenever it is indicated by intelligence.

Urine Testing

- 6.75 Between July 2012 and May 2013, Roebourne was required to undertake urine tests on three occasions as part of the statewide drug prevalence testing program in prisons. Under this program, prisoners to be tested are randomly selected by a computer in Head Office and forwarded to the prison on a three-monthly basis. A total of 175 tests were conducted as part of this program during this period of which just nine or 5.1 per cent were positives. If reliable, this is quite a good result. During a similar period (in fact between 01 July 2012 and 04 June 2013), the prison also ordered 92 prisoners to undertake urine tests chosen from intelligence and analysis of behaviours. Of these, 32 returned a positive result or 34.8 per cent.

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- 6.76 Local management question the value of a prevalence program that involves enormous disruption to the prison routine and enormous expense and so ineffective at identifying those using drugs in the prison. This Office has recently questioned the reliability of urine sample procedures used by DCS for both purposes and recommended that it ensure that a fair, transparent and defensible drug testing procedure is put in place.¹⁰¹ The conduct of prevalence testing over two or three days especially lends itself to distortion as prisoners may suspend substance use, drink excessive water or attempt to arrange a substitute fluid for testing to avoid detection.

Intelligence and Security Management

- 6.77 The acting Assistant Superintendent Security was confident of building a good Intel base around effective interaction by officers with prisoners and maintains direct contact with some prisoners. The phone monitoring form has been amended to encourage officers to email security about potential issues which appears to have increased the number of reports being submitted. It was also hoped to encourage more discussion between the officers and security to strengthen that essential relationships. There has been no training for the officers in the area of intelligence gathering and reporting other than one officer who was trained two or more years ago. There appears to be a good relationship with the Justice Intelligence Service at head office.
- 6.78 We heard evidence that the security portfolio is hampered by the degree of attention taken by procedural compliance and that a further position would enhance its effectiveness in investigation, analysis, consultation, feedback, dissemination of information, security-related staff training, strategic planning, reviewing current practices and implementation of more efficient practices.

CORRECTING MISBEHAVIOUR

- 6.79 Prosecutions at Roebourne is run by a prison officer qualified in prosecutions who has to find time in his normal roster to attend to the additional work load of prosecutions and without incurring overtime. He is not relieved when on leave and when recently returning from five weeks leave had 17 outstanding charges for which paper work existed waiting to be processed. He also found others not properly written up. One such case involved threats made to a staff member. The prosecutor had not been notified of the matter and only became aware when the victim asked if it had been dealt with. The prisoner had already been released.
- 6.80 Hearings are typically held in unit interview rooms which lacks the gravitas and safer environment of a dedicated hearing room, but are easy to accommodate as staff are not taken away from the unit. Roebourne Regional Prison only has one Visiting Justice (VJ) who also works for a local mining company. While very responsive, he is often out of town. This often creates delays in the hearing of charges. Consideration is currently being given to establishing regular VJ hearings by video link to Casuarina prison.

101 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Greenough Regional Prison*, Report No. 83 (March 2013) 21, [3.25]–[3.27] and Recommendation 4.

- 6.81 There is a need for the prosecutions role to be allocated dedicated time for it to be fully operational and efficient. It should ideally become a part-time position, possibly combined with another responsibility such as security assistant or videolink officer. This would increase the efficiency and quality of the role.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (USE OF FORCE)

- 6.82 Roebourne staff appear very capable of talking prisoners “down” in that they are able to diffuse many situations through talking with the prisoner. This means that there is little use of force or restraints. For the 12-month period to 19 September 2013 there were 16 occasions when staff reported on TOMS the use of restraints on prisoners. Three of the occasions when handcuffs were applied were for medical escorts and the remainder appeared (on reading the relevant reports) to have been appropriately applied in the context of managing a behavioural incident. The last reported use of a chemical agent at RRP was in January 2012 when a prisoner had to be removed from a cell having failed to follow instructions.

Recommendation 29

Consider additional staff resources for security and prosecutions.

- 6.83 The Office has previously drawn attention to and recommended that custodial officers across the state be given training in safely removing prisoners from top bunks in the event of an emergency, including of course a cell extraction.¹⁰² This recommendation was supported by DCS but has not resulted in any changes to procedures. The Department’s action plan for tracking progress reported that ‘the existing manual handling training is deemed sufficient.’ When asked how a non-responsive or reluctant prisoner would be removed from a top bunk, staff were not at all confident that it could be done safely.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- 6.84 Emergency exercises for the prison both live and desk top are up to date and the last live exercise was conducted on 27 June 2012 with another in the planning at the time of the inspection. Regular staff shortages make it difficult to conduct live exercises or even desk top exercises, but management realise that such shortages could exist in a real situation and as such conducts the exercise anyway.
- 6.85 Management are also very aware of the risk associated with attempting to remove a would-be escapee if caught in the razor wire perimeter fence. The prison has a cage that can attach to a forklift for the purpose of fence retrievals but a forklift can’t be used in most parts of the perimeter inside or out due to uneven ground. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (formerly FESA) in the past had declined to enter into a MOU with the prison for the retrieval of prisoners from the fence.

Recommendation 30

Develop and implement strategies for the safe removal of prisoners from upper bunks and from razor wire.

¹⁰² OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 70 (February 2011) 12 and Recommendation 4.

Appendix 1

THE DEPARTMENT'S REPOSE TO THE 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
1. Review orientation processes for both male and female prisoners to ensure that orientation is consistent, comprehensive and effective.	Supported Roebourne Regional Prison will review the current Local Order relating to the orientation process and consider improvements which can be made to ensure that the information provided is consistent, comprehensive and effective.
2. Conclude the audit and remediation of substandard bunk beds at Roebourne Regional Prison without further delay.	Supported In Principle – Subject To Funding The audit of cells has been completed and the beds identified for upgrade to Ligature – Minimisation Standards have been costed. Funding was only available for one site and it was indicated that Bandyup was the priority. The remediation of substandard bunk beds of other sites is dependent on further funding being received.
3. Renovate cells including replacement of warped shutters, cell doors, shelving, noticeboards and linoleum where required, and repaint all surfaces and provide under-bed storage.	Supported – Subject To Funding All window shutters are the newer metal units, there are no wooden window shutters on any cell windows. Opening/closing control of the shutters are being looked at but are difficult to fit as this would necessitate making a hole somewhere in the insect screens. The program to replace all cell doors was commenced in late December 2013 and new doors have been fitted to all cells in unit two. The replacement of older style cupboards and shelving and repairs to linoleum flooring will require additional funding.
4. Install suitable climatic controls to reduce air temperatures and to increase cool air circulation in prisoners' cells at Roebourne Regional Prison.	Not Supported A business case to install air conditioning in cells was developed in 2011 and considered by the Commissioner's Executive Team (CET) in June 2012. CET did not support the proposal and removed the item from the Department's Strategic Asset Plan. In January 2013, the question of climate control across all facilities was identified as an issue by CET, but considered of 'low relative priority' so it has not been considered in the 2013/14 forward estimates period.

THE DEPARTMENT'S REPOSE TO THE 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>5. Provide other measures to help mitigate the impact of the harsh climate, including provision of air-conditioned indoor spaces for prisoners at work (as appropriate), education and in their units.</p>	<p>Supported In Principle</p> <p>Various options to reduce the impact of harsh climate are continually being explored and will be implemented within available budget resources. Changes to the prison routine for the two main seasonal changes (winter and summer) were explored a number of years ago and it was found that the resultant changes required to rosters, leave periods and services from external agencies did not support such a change.</p>
<p>6. Consider means to revitalise and sustain an effective Aboriginal Visitor Scheme at Roebourne Regional Prison.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>It is acknowledged that there have been long absences of AVS at Roebourne Prison, and AVS have made many attempts through local agencies to recruit, to no avail. A concerted effort will occur in the coming months to try and attract potential candidates. A fly-in-fly-out option would be difficult due to budgetary constraints, and it does not meet the original intent of the service which is to have local Aboriginal people to visit with Aboriginal people in the prison to reduce the likelihood of self-harm and/or suicide. This will however be considered further if recruitment strategies are unsuccessful.</p> <p>The protocol that is in place between AVS and Adult Custodial outlines the agreed level of service provision that is required at this facility, as agreed to by both parties. Adherence to agreed protocols and levels of service provision has now been established as a Key Performance Indicator for AVS.</p>
<p>7. Develop a recreation development plan for RRP giving consideration to promotion of fitness and healthy lifestyles involving all prisoner cohorts; training and employment opportunities for prisoners; creating an indoor recreation facility; enhancing in-unit fitness and recreation options; cultural participation and development, including dedicated spaces for art and music; access to the library including electronic resources; and community links.</p>	<p>Supported – Subject To Funding</p> <p>Whilst there is a current and comprehensive Recreation Plan in place within the Prison, it is acknowledged that some of the equipment requires replacement and that a review of existing infrastructure, including the oval, needs to be conducted.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S REPOSE TO THE 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
8. Allow women prisoners to attend religious services.	<p>Supported – Existing Departmental Initiative These services are currently available to female prisoners.</p>
9. Simplify rules and procedures relating to the receipt and use of money by prisoners from outside sources and remove barriers and disincentives for prisoners wishing to save.	<p>Supported The local order has been established with extremely good intention to address significant security risks although it is acknowledged that there have been unintended consequences from the timeframes required for the submitting of the form. The Superintendent will consider those issues outlined above and conduct a further review of the local order.</p>
10. Improve facilities, activities and services for women held at Roebourne Regional Prison, and provide supervised opportunities to associate with male family and friends.	<p>Not Supported In early 2013, the Department made the decision to provide a more focused and cohesive Women’s Service Delivery Model by allocating resources and funding to the Greenough Regional Prison Women’s Precinct to provide enhanced services for female prisoners. Roebourne Regional Prison retains a small short term holding facility for women for the purpose of court hearings and visits, and as such, the service delivery model has been reduced to accommodate this. There are opportunities for integration between male and female prisoners already in place.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S REPOSE TO THE 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>11. A properly resourced women's precinct should be re-established at Roebourne Regional Prison. This should include a full-time Women's Support Officer and a restoration of traditional freedoms of association, movement and participation in recreation, education and training.</p>	<p>Not Supported</p> <p>In early 2013, the Department made the decision to provide a more focused and cohesive Women's Service Delivery Model by allocating resources and funding to the Greenough Regional Prison Women's Precinct that provides enhanced services for female prisoners. Roebourne Regional Prison retains a small short-term holding facility for women for the purpose of court hearings and visits, and as such the service delivery model has been reduced to accommodate this. There are limited opportunities e.g. visits for integration between male and female prisoners.</p> <p>The Women Support Officer position has been withdrawn in line with the reduced service delivery and the FTE subsequently transferred to Greenough Regional Prison in line with the new model. The women's area at Roebourne Regional Prison receives support from both the Peer Support Officer and the Aboriginal Visitor's Scheme (AVS).</p>
<p>12. Expand the health centre and create a decent waiting area for prisoners.</p>	<p>Supported – Subject To Funding</p> <p>At present the Department's Strategic Asset Plan indicates Roebourne Regional Prison's Health Centre is scheduled for replacement in the 2016/17 financial year. Funding has been requested in the forward estimates and subject to this and Departmental priorities this work will remain on this schedule.</p>
<p>13. Increase the provision of general practice at the Roebourne Regional Prison Health Centre.</p>	<p>Supported In Principle</p> <p>Health Services supplies General Practitioner services at Roebourne Regional Prison within its FTE and budget. Previously the prison had utilised local GP services, however this could not be reliably provided and DCS subsequently needed to ensure service delivery. Hence, the prison now utilise the local hospital and the visiting prison GP.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S REPOSE TO THE 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>14. Review the health and mental health screening processes at Roebourne Regional Prison, and if necessary across the State.</p>	<p>Not Supported There is no one validated tool appropriate for generalist screening to identify a myriad of different mental illnesses. A portion of the screening tool currently utilised (AMR 10–12) screens for basic mental and general health, and risk issues. This is supported by a visiting general practitioner and a secondary referral e.g. – morbidity service. Processes are monitored, audited and supported by policies that are regularly reviewed.</p>
<p>15. Develop a health care strategy for Roebourne Regional Prison to guide the development of health care services, inclusive of a particular focus on Aboriginal health, women’s health, screening practices, care practices, team portfolios, in–reach services, mental health care, health promotion and throughcare practices.</p>	<p>Supported In Part The primary care model of health delivery at all DCS sites is inclusive of Aboriginal health requirements. The Department has open ended recruitment programs for Registered Nurses, however, to date there has been no applications received from Aboriginal people to work at Roebourne Prison. Roebourne health staff continue to engage locally with AMS, who have the contract via 'Closing the Gap' funding, to provide assistance to prisoners on release in accessing community health services.</p>
<p>16. Provide mental health care training for nursing staff at Roebourne Regional Prison Health Centre, and mental health first aid training to custodial staff and others working with prisoners.</p>	<p>Supported In Principle The Academy does provide Mental Health First Aid training. There is also an arrangement that a Clinical Nurse Consultant Comorbidity and the Manager Comorbidity are both available during office hours five days a week to support Roebourne nursing staff by phone or teleconference.</p>
<p>17. Establish a dental facility at Roebourne Regional Prison Health Centre.</p>	<p>Not Supported Roebourne currently houses 146 prisoners who utilise local dental services. The construction of a dental clinic at Roebourne Regional Prison is not currently a priority in the Department's asset plan.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S REPOSE TO THE 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>18. Explore engagement of an external provider to allow in-reach drug and alcohol services prior to release, and to permit seamless re-entry services to those with substance misuse disorders transitioning into the community.</p>	<p>Supported In Part – Subject To Funding There is a need to distinguish the difference in required skill sets between the management of acute withdrawals versus those required for AOD counselling. All registered nurses are skilled in recognising and treating withdrawals. In line with community standards prisoners have the right to refuse treatment. Many of the prisoners admitted to Roebourne have binge drinking patterns that do not require medically assisted withdrawal and this is part of the risk assessment made by the admitting nurse. The engagement of an external provider has been attempted with the finding that the local community is not sufficiently resourced to provide any inreach service. However, Prison Counselling Services (PCS) provide crisis counselling and assist prisoners with the adjustment to imprisonment, which may include brief drug and alcohol interventions.</p>
<p>19. Dedicate additional resources for prisoner assessment and report writing.</p>	<p>Supported Under the 2013/4 staffing review process, the need for an additional report writer will be considered in conjunction with the staffing model for the new work camp. This will be considered in line with current FTE requirements and on an identified needs basis.</p>
<p>20. A strategy for increased prisoner engagement in employment, education, training and community work should be developed.</p>	<p>Supported The new town work camp due for completion in early 2014 has afforded Roebourne Regional Prison the opportunity to review and implement holistic principles of skills training and employment opportunities. This will allow prisoners to progress through available constructive skilling opportunities within the Prison in to the new work camp and enhancing services where a void had occurred due to the closure of Millstream work camp and the DECCA training site.</p>
<p>21. Staffing for industry, vocational training and external work should be fully restored, quarantined as far as practical from cross deployment to other duties and adequate relief arrangements established.</p>	<p>Supported The 2013/14 staffing review process is aimed at ensuring that appropriate staffing levels are in place to ensure service delivery is maintained as required. With the establishment, and appropriate staffing of the new work camp this will assist in providing enhanced constructive activity within the prison.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S REPOSE TO THE 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>22. Establish a staffing policy for education and vocational training at Roebourne Regional Prison that acknowledges the special difficulties of maintaining such a service in such an environment, reduces its exposure to vacancy management, has appropriate measures aimed at staff retention and includes an Indigenous recruitment and development component.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>The Department acknowledges that at the time of the inspection, two positions (Campus Manager and Prisoner Education Coordinator) were in the midst of a recruitment campaign both of which have been filled since. Currently the only position not filled is the Aboriginal Education Worker (AEW). The AEW position was advertised in 2013 with no suitable applicants. Currently the position is filled casually with a view to training an applicant for the full-time position.</p> <p>In semester one of 2014, an additional Prisoner Education Coordinator position will be advertised to assume the training coordination at the new town work camp. There are numerous measures in place to ensure staff retention at Roebourne and it should also be noted that there are government wide recruitment policy and guidelines that need to be adhered to.</p> <p>The Department recognises the difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff in the Pilbara region and will establish a Staff Retention Recruitment Policy which is Pilbara specific. This will be linked directly to the establishment of the new work camp.</p>
<p>23. Restore employment services to prisoners at Roebourne Regional Prison.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>The substantive Employment Coordinator at Roebourne Regional Prison is on Worker's Compensation and another officer has been employed on a full time basis acting in the position since November 2013. With the commissioning of the new work camp, the Employment Coordinator will operate from the new building and perform a role as part of an integrated offender education, training and employment plan. The oversight of the position from Perth is not problematic from any other areas of the service and in conjunction with prison management strategies will be devised to manage the situation which includes the function and position.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S REPOSE TO THE 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>24. The reasons for poor recidivism outcomes at Roebourne Regional Prison should be reviewed, with input from relevant stakeholders. A rehabilitation strategy for Roebourne Regional Prison should be developed.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>The Department will look to replicate the work currently being undertaken at Greenough Regional Prison and West Kimberley Regional Prison in relation to the Integrated Offender Management, once the new work camp has been commissioned. This will provide the opportunity to review and enhance service delivery with a view to seamless sentence.</p>
<p>25. DCS should develop a stronger negotiating stance with GROH to make savings within the rental budget.</p>	<p>Supported In Principle</p> <p>The Department is a party and bound to the Department of Corrective Services Prison Officers' Enterprise Agreement 2013 which sets out a regional incentive allowance that requires the Department to provide Government Regional Officer Housing for this Prison which is rent free. Therefore, the Department needs whatever housing stock is available from the Department of Housing for employees covered by this Agreement.</p> <p>For this reason negotiations to obtain savings in the rental budget would be difficult to achieve from a supply vs demand perspective because the Roebourne Prison must be staffed. However, there is the potential for the Department to consider alternative service providers and/or to promote the Home Ownership Subsidy Scheme amongst staff.</p>
<p>26. Develop a Pilbara Custodial Plan in consultation with relevant community organisations and stakeholders. As part of this plan, give consideration to establishing a new facility in the Port Hedland region, constructing a replacement prison at Roebourne and an appropriate facility for women.</p>	<p>Supported In Principle</p> <p>The Department is currently considering options associated with longer term custodial planning across the State in the context of infrastructure, transport and rehabilitation.</p>

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>27. Implement effective HR strategies to reduce bullying, improve performance, minimise vacancies and manage absences.</p>	<p>Supported In Principle</p> <p>The DCS is aware of allegations of Bullying in the Workplace at RRP. DCS has policies, procedures and systems in place to address any allegations of inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. The grievance process is available to all staff who may wish to raise an allegation of bullying in the workplace. Some of the allegations at RRP have been addressed through this process. Training is conducted in grievance management and bullying in the workplace for all new prison officers, as part of their Entry Level training. Additionally, training was conducted for the management team at RRP in September 2013, due to knowledge of allegations of workplace bullying at that site. Ideally, the anti-bullying training would be extended to all staff at RRP (public servants and Prison Officers).</p> <p>Performance Appraisal: In 2013, 78% of staff in DCS had a current Performance Appraisal agreement in place. At Roebourne Regional Prison the compliance was at 70% for 2013. Significant improvements have been made for the 2014 Performance Appraisal and Development process for Prison Officers, and it is anticipated that this will gradually have a positive impact on the attitude of employees towards the Performance Appraisal and Development System in the custodial setting. Additionally, Performance Appraisal and Development training is conducted regularly for managers by the Training Academy.</p> <p>Vacancy management: Prisons Officer vacancies are managed as part of a strategic planned approach between workforce planning, recruitment and the Training Academy. However, vacancy management of the Vocational Support Officers and public servants is coordinated locally at the prison level. Recruitment and selection procedures and tools are available on the intranet to assist the prisons in this area. Additionally, training in recruitment and selection is provided as part of the professional development calendar of training for DCS employees. It has been proposed that recruitment and selection</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>continued over</i></p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S REPOSE TO THE 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
	<p>training program be provided on site at all prisons to address vacancy management. This has yet to be implemented.</p> <p>Absence management: In 2012/2013, the department and the WAPOU worked together to develop a Guideline specifically to address the issue of managing absences of Prison Officers. Strategies were developed and implemented in this regard, including training conducted at RRP in this area. The new 2013 Enterprise Agreement for Prison Officers further strengthens controls in the area of management of absences, and currently the HR Policy branch in DCS is finalising new strategies to implement these changes early in 2014.</p>
<p>28. Consider capital works investments to reduce the long term costs of utilities.</p>	<p>Supported – Subject To Funding</p> <p>The Department consciously promotes sustainability where possible and would consider initiatives to reduce the longer term costs of utilities, dependent on funding being available for capital works investments.</p> <p>The issue of poor insulation has not been formerly raised with Infrastructure Services and no assessment has been made as to the accuracy of this statement within the report.</p>
<p>29. Consider additional staff resources for security and prosecutions.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>In line with the 2010 staffing review, the 2013/14 staffing review will consider the allocation of resources in line with benchmarks established through the 2010 process. Where the prison demonstrates through these that there are particular changes in circumstances that warrant additional resources this will be fully considered.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S REPOSE TO THE 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
30. Develop and implement strategies for the safe removal of prisoners from upper bunks and from razor wire.	<p>Supported In Principle</p> <p>It is recognised that there is a need to further enhance the 'at height razor wire retrieval' process, particularly for regional prisons of which five contain razor wire at height. A meeting occurred on the 20th December 2013 with senior members of Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), where the 'at height' razor wire retrieval issue was discussed with agreement that site by site workshops will occur between DCS and DFES to explore workable and sustainable procedures.</p> <p>In addition ACCO Notice 18/2013 was issued requiring prisons to ensure that clear signage warning of the danger of razor wires are clearly displayed at a reasonable distance on approach to the razor wire.</p> <p>Upper Bunk Beds: As stated in 'Identification of existing controls' there is existing process for determining suitability for upper bunk occupancy, however there is no defined process that addresses the actual removal of a prisoner from the top bunk should it be required. A cell extraction process may need to be explored/developed for non-compliant prisoners on the top bunk and further investigation into the use of harness type equipment.</p>

Appendix 2

SCORECARD ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2010/2011 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No.	Recommendations By Type of Recommendation/Duration Report No. 70, <i>Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison.</i>	Assessment of the Department's Implementations				
		Poor	Less than acceptable	Acceptable	More than acceptable	Excellent
1.	Future Planning Develop a Pilbara Custodial Plan in consultation with relevant community organisations and stakeholders. As part of this plan, give consideration to establishing a new facility in the Port Hedland region and constructing a replacement prison at Roebourne.	•				
2.	Future Planning Keep under active review the option of constructing, in the short term, a minimum–security area outside the current perimeter fence.					•
3.	Physical Condition and Maintenance Deficits Physical Condition and Maintenance Deficits Implement a comprehensive preventative maintenance plan.			•		
4.	Bunk Beds a) At Roebourne Regional Prison and across the system as a whole, replace or modify beds that do not comply with appropriate safety standards. b) Provide custodial officers across the state with training in removing people from top bunks in the event of medical or other emergencies.		•			
5.	Climate Control a) Install suitable climatic controls to reduce air temperatures and to increase cool air circulation in prisoners' cells at Roebourne Regional Prison. b) Explore and implement other management measures to reduce the impact of the harsh climate.	•				
6.	Workshops and Stores Expand industries and vocational skills and training programs on site; and relocate the store to facilitate this expansion.			•		

SCORECARD ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2010/2011
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No.	Recommendations By Type of Recommendation/Duration Report No. 70, Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison.	Assessment of the Department's Implementations				
		Poor	Less than acceptable	Acceptable	More than acceptable	Excellent
7.	Management of Staff Develop and implement strategies at both departmental and prison levels to stabilise and harmonise the leadership team at Roebourne; develop good processes for communication and cooperation; and build up peoples' sense of commitment to their colleagues, their managers and their work.			•		
8.	Communication with Visitors Provide more extensive training at Roebourne with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural awareness (using local Aboriginal providers if possible); and • customer service techniques. 		•			
9.	Aboriginal Visitor Scheme Ensure that the Aboriginal Visitor Scheme has a consistent and effective presence at Roebourne Regional Prison and also at all other prisons (including coverage for any lengthy absence).	•				
10.	Prison Support Officer Ensure that the Prison Support Officer position has a consistent and effective presence at Roebourne Regional Prison (including coverage for any lengthy absence).					
11.	Food <ol style="list-style-type: none"> For the vast majority of prisoners, use the dining room for all meals. In the case of prisoners who are required to eat their meals in the units, provide suitable facilities including chairs, tables and washing facilities. 			•		
12.	Women's Support Officer <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the WSO position has a consistent and effective presence at Roebourne Regional Prison (including coverage for any lengthy absence). Increase the WSO position to a full FTE. 	•				

SCORECARD ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2010/2011
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No.	Recommendations By Type of Recommendation/Duration Report No. 70, Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison.	Assessment of the Department's Implementations				
		Poor	Less than acceptable	Acceptable	More than acceptable	Excellent
13.	Services Review and revise appointment practices across the prison estate and implement a system or systems that improve timeliness and communication.	•				
14.	Dental, External Specialist and Allied Health Services Ensure that the new contractual arrangements relating to prisoner transport that will come into force in 2011 result in a better service with respect to external medical/allied health/dental appointments.			•		
15.	Assessment and Care Planning Develop and implement an Aboriginal health care strategy at Roebourne Regional Prison Health Centre that recognises the cultural and differing gendered needs of the local prisoner population. This strategy should include details of and commitment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively recruiting Aboriginal health staff as vacancies occur; developing and implementing culturally appropriate clinical assessment tools; actively engaging Aboriginal health care organisations to provide in-reach services to the prison; and providing training in the delivery of culturally sensitive health care. 		•			
16.	DECCA Station Fund and provide staffing and other resources to DECCA to increase the level of service provided to prisoners, the prison and the community.			N/A		
17.	Prisoner Employment Program (PEP) Ensure that the approval processes and eligibility criteria for the PEP program make it accessible to as many prisoners as possible.	•				

Appendix 3

THE INSPECTION TEAM

Andrew Harvey	Deputy Inspector
Christopher Davers	Director of Operations
Jim Bryden	Inspections and Research Officer
Amanda Coghlan	Inspections and Research Officer
Michelle Higgins	Inspections and Research Officer
Cliff Holdom	Inspections and Research Officer
Joseph Wallam	Community Liaison Officer
Dr Edward Petch	Expert Adviser Director, State Forensic Mental Health Service
Cheryl Wiltshire	Expert Adviser Curriculum Officer, Dept. Trade and Workforce Development

Appendix 4

KEY DATES

Formal notification of announced inspection	31 May 2013
Pre-inspection community consultation	30 July 2013
Start of on-site phase	12 September 2013
Completion of on-site phase	19 September 2013
Inspection exit debrief	20 September 2013
Draft Report sent to the Department of Corrective Services	13 December 2013
Draft Report returned by the Department of Corrective Services	24 January 2014
Declaration of Prepared Report	14 February 2014

*Inspection of prisons, court custody centres, prescribed lock-ups,
juvenile detention centres and review of custodial services in Western Australia.*



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